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KINGSTON, ONTARIO

PRIZE ESSAY.

THE CANALS OF CANADA:

THEIR

PROSPECTS AND INFLUENCE.

WRITTEN FOR A PREMIUM OFFERED BY

HIS EXCELLENCY THE EARL OF ELGIN AND KINCARDINE, K. T.,
GOVERNOR GENERAL OF BRITISH NORTH AMERICA, ETC., ETC., ETC.,

BY

THOS. C. KEEFER, CIVIL ENGINEER.



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INTRODUCTION.

THE following ESSAY was written for a Prize of Fifty Pounds, offered by the Earl of Elgin and Kincardine, Governor General of Canada.

His Excellency's intentions in offering this prize are explained in the extract of a letter addressed by Major Campbell, Governor's Secretary, to H. Ruttan, Esquire, President of the Upper Canada Agricultural Association, under date the 8th of August, 1849, given below :

“ His Excellency is desirous to offer, through you as President of the Upper Canada Agricultural Association, for general competition, the following Prize :— ‘ *For the best Treatise on the bearing of the St. Lawrence and Welland Canals on the interests of Canada as an Agricultural Country—£50.* ’ Competitors will send their Treatises on or before the first day of February, 1850, to the Office of the Governor's Secretary ; each Treatise to be headed by a motto, and accompanied by a sealed letter endorsed with the same motto, containing the name and address of the writer. The latter will not be opened until the Prize shall have been awarded.

“ It is His Excellency’s intention to request the Council of the Association to name two gentlemen to act as judges, to whom His Excellency will add a third.

“ As it is His Excellency’s desire that practical information on a subject deeply affecting their interests should be presented, in clear language and accessible form, to the farmers of Canada through the medium of the Prize, he trusts that the competitors in framing their Treatises, and the judges in pronouncing their award, will keep this object in view.”

Ten Essays were sent in within the prescribed time, and submitted to John Young, H. Ruttan, and E. W. Thomson, Esquires, who kindly consented to act as judges on the occasion. The Prize was awarded to the Treatise which follows; but several of the others were highly commended by the judges.

THE CANALS OF CANADA,

THEIR

PROSPECTS AND INFLUENCE.

THE subject of our Essay, in its more extended sense, embraces the consideration of the influence of Commerce upon Agriculture,—an influence which can neither be mistaken nor denied, and is clearly traceable upon the page of history, from the earliest ages to the present time. Ever since the “merchant princes” of Tyre explored with their ships the coasts of the then known world for the products of Spain, Britain, India, or Africa,—or traversed the sands of Arabia on camels laden with “myrrh, spicery, and the balm of Gilead,” for the supply of Egypt or Persia,—the power, wealth, and intelligence of every country have been in direct proportion to the extent and diversity of its commercial intercourse.

Phœnician merchants purchased the obnoxious dreamer of Canaan from his envious brethren, and “sold him into Egypt,”—a commercial transaction in which a world was interested:—Tyrian ships carried the knowledge of letters—the “noble art of speaking to the eyes,”—into then barbarous Greece, and planted the germs of that civilization which Athens nourished, and which has survived the fall of Rome. By them the gold of Ophir and the cedars of

Lebanon were collected and prepared for the decoration of the Temple of Jerusalem;—and to a Tyrian worker in brass did King Solomon entrust “the brazen laver, the pillars, the chapter, the pomegranates, and the molten sea,” which adorned the chosen dwelling of Jehovah. Carthage, the proud rival of the last mistress of the world, was founded by those fleets of Tyre whose flag first passed the Pillars of Hercules,—braved the unknown Atlantic, and gave the earliest idea of commerce to our Parent Isle,—then the *Ultima Thule* of the northern world—since, the acknowledged Ruler of the ocean. The arms of Tyre, which once withstood Alexander, have long since succumbed to that superiority in after nations to which her own arts gave birth; but the influence of the latter will be coëxtensive with population,—coëval with time. The Mediterranean, a sheltered and tideless sea, was the natural mother of commerce in those ages when navigation was in its infancy—when Sicily was a land of fable and of monsters to the Greek—and those celebrated cities which for so many centuries ruled the destinies of the Ancient World, owed their power and their glory, chiefly to this most extensive, protected, and favourably situated of perennial navigations. And if we, in a later day, examine the physical characteristics of different countries, we shall find their population, power and wealth, both proportionate to, and centred upon their navigable rivers and favourable water communications.

Britain is indebted for her great power, wealth and maritime superiority, not only to her coal, minerals, and insular position,—but also to the comparative magnitude and navigable qualities of her rivers and harbours. The growth of cities is limited by the extent of the districts

from which their supplies are drawn, and to their facilities for obtaining the latter. London could not have attained its extraordinary size without the Thames,—Paris without the Seine,—New York without the Hudson, and the Erie Canal,—or New Orleans without the Mississippi: while Montreal and Quebec would never have existed but for the St. Lawrence. The absence of navigable rivers is the most probable key to the extreme barbarism of Africa,—Egypt and the coast of the Mediterranean only excepted,—while their number and magnitude have made Asia a mother of nations, and Europe the wealthiest and most enlightened portion of the globe.

Rivers which run in the direction of a meridian, like the Nile and the Mississippi, are supposed to possess decided advantages over those having the direction of the parallels of latitude, such as the Amazon and St. Lawrence, inasmuch as the former traverse a variety of climes, yielding different productions, and therefore enjoy greater facilities for commercial exchange. For this reason it is supposed that the valley of the Mississippi, with its wonderful extent of unobstructed navigation, will shortly become the seat of a commerce such as the world has never before seen:—the corn, flax, furs, timber, wool and manufactures of the North being directly exchanged by inland navigation, for the sugar, rice, cotton, tobacco, and fruits of the South. There are, however, considerations of climate which modify the first view of these prospective advantages, although they by no means counterbalance them. The enervating and unhealthy nature of the climate will operate as a constant check to population and commerce, in such cities as New Orleans,—while the unavoidable and unequal dependance upon their customers, for the prime necessary of life, either

gives a misdirection to labour, or throws an air of uncertainty about the future destiny of luxury-producing countries. The relative growth of New York and New Orleans,—and commercial progress of Lake Erie and the Mississippi,—are by no means unfavourable to the North. In consequence of the similarity of productions which must exist upon the borders of rivers occupying nearly the same parallels of latitude throughout their course, the exchange of products by its occupants may not be as extensive as in the former case, but the identity of interests and feeling will probably maintain the control of their common highway under one jurisdiction:—while on the other hand, the possible diversity of interest, and different temperaments of a people commanding the Southern outlet of a great river, may prove prejudicial, if not ruinous, to the commerce of the North:—the maintenance of amicable relations and friendly tariffs being the first great requisite to commercial advancement.

RIVER ST. LAWRENCE.

The position of the river St. Lawrence with respect to climate and latitude is one which is calculated at first view to excite misgiving and dissatisfaction:—but upon a full and fair investigation we must admit, (what indeed ought to have been assumed,) that when the Almighty Maker of the Universe “poured the rivers out of the hollow of His hand,” He gave them that direction which should ultimately ensure the greatest good to the greatest number. Another supposition would be contrary both to Reason and to Faith, and accordingly we find it impossible to propose any more advantageous position for the St. Lawrence than

that which was given it when "the waters were divided from the waters;" or any embouchure more suitable to the valley from which it proceeds. We could not secure an unfrozen outlet north of Virginia; we could not improve upon the position of the lakes, and we would not like to abandon the timber of the Ottawa, the coal of Cape Breton and Nova Scotia, or the fisheries of the Gulf. No other direction could be assigned to this river which would, "take it for all in all," afford the same future advantages. Hereafter we shall notice the alleged inferiority, and endeavour to ascertain its comparative value.

This great river,—which for commercial purposes may be said to commence in Lake Superior, the largest body of fresh water on the globe,—leaves the valuable mines upon the coasts of that inland sea, and descending through six degrees of latitude, embracing an extraordinary extent of coast and a fresh-water fishery in the Huron Archipelago, which is only surpassed by the astonishing one at its mouth—penetrates the fruit-bearing zone of Ohio, Western New York and Western Canada,—the garden of North America for the variety and excellence of its products, and the seat of a commerce to which no limit can be assigned. From Lake Erie, this great outlet takes a course almost in a direct line to the Atlantic Ocean, ascending to the same latitude from which it took its departure on the northern shores of Lake Superior. There can be no doubt of the favourable influence of the great lakes Huron, Michigan, Erie and Ontario upon the surrounding and included territory, for we do not find that similar fruits can be produced in the same parallels in Eastern New York or New England. It is this northern embouchure of the St. Lawrence which has thrown discredit upon its capabi-

lities for relieving and supplying those upper districts which it drains ; and for the commerce, as well as the water of which, it is the natural outlet.

If we were to seek the causes of the comparative depreciation at which the St. Lawrence route has been held, we would most probably find them in this expression, "*natural outlet*;" for we have counted too long and too much upon mere geographical advantages. *Hitherto* it has been in a state of nature obstructed by falls and rapids,—whilst its great rival the Mississippi is *naturally* navigable almost to its sources ; the opening also of an artificial substitute from Albany to Buffalo, nearly twenty years before the improvement of the St. Lawrence was undertaken, has, with the concurrent advantages of greater population and wealth, aided by a most unwise and exclusive policy on our part, caused a temporary diversion of Western trade from its proper channel : a circumstance which, so far from discouraging, should only teach us that "natural" advantages can be surpassed by national enterprise, and shew us that the great trade of that portion of the West, north of Ohio, the "natural outlet" of which is the Mississippi, may, by proper effort on our part, be attracted through the St. Lawrence.

CLIMATE.

Much has been advanced in disparagement of the Canadian climate, and there is reason to believe that its inconveniences have been exaggerated, while its advantages have been overlooked ; for it is demonstrable that our commerce, wealth and prosperity, are in a great measure dependent upon those identical conditions which have been assumed to militate against us.

The climate of Canada is undoubtedly colder in winter and warmer in summer than that of countries between the same parallels in Continental Europe, but it is at the same time more constant; and these extremes, apparently so objectionable, in reality extend the range of our productions far beyond those in similar European latitudes. The strong and steady heat of our summer matures, with surprising rapidity, the most valuable plants, while the extreme cold of the winter enables us to combine the products of the northern with those of southern climes.

The grape, peach, and melon, come to perfection in Western Canada, but cannot be produced in the damper climate of England; while wheat, which cannot be grown in Norway, ripens in similar latitudes of Eastern Canada. We are enabled therefore, to embrace the range of products from the tobacco, rice, and fruits of temperate climes, to the wheat, hemp and hardy grains of the North. The severity of our winters are unfavourable to grazing, and increase the consumption of fuel, yet without the ice and the snow the invaluable timber of our extensive forests would be worthless:—and inasmuch as we do not find the fertility of the soil impaired by the frost, we are justified in assuming that our winters have the same invigorating effect upon the earth, for our peculiar productions, as that conferred by rest upon the human frame: and that when the mantle of snow is removed, the soil, “like a giant refreshed by sleep,” is enabled to send forth that rapid and luxuriant vegetation which renders a longer summer unnecessary. Nor are we without encouragement to persevere, or hope of future amelioration in this respect;—Gibbon tells us that “in the days of Cæsar, the Rhine and the Danube were frozen over so firmly, as to

permit the irruption of the barbarian hordes with their cavalry and heavy waggons, an event of which there is no modern instance on record." The reindeer, which is not now found south of Lapland or Siberia, was then a native of the Hercynian forest, in Germany and Poland.

"The immense woods which intercepted the rays of the sun from the earth have been cleared, the morasses drained, and in proportion as the soil is cultivated the air has become more temperate. Canada at this day is an exact picture of ancient Germany. Although situated in the same parallel with the finest provinces of France and England, that country experiences the most rigorous cold. The reindeer (cariboo) are very numerous, the ground is covered with deep and lasting snow, and the great river St. Lawrence is regularly frozen, in a season when the waters of the Seine and Thames are usually free from ice." We should never forget that we owe it more to our climate than our soil, that we are blessed with an abundant and certain crop of that most valuable production of the earth,—wheat,—the great staple of our commerce, and the prime necessary of civilized life.

Before we attempt to establish the position which we have assumed for the St. Lawrence, and to consider the bearing which its being made navigable must have on the interests of Canada as an agricultural country, we deem it advisable to examine the character of the navigation as improved, and also to take a view of the past and present, before we can safely estimate the future trade of this river. The subject is extremely comprehensive,—the farming interests of Canada are the interests of its whole population, four-fifths of whom are directly engaged in, and nearly all dependent upon, its agriculture.

Every consideration therefore, foreign or domestic, which bears however remotely upon the trade of Canada, must necessarily affect our Canals, and be of importance to the agricultural interests of a country, which already produces a surplus of food, and to which a market for that surplus is an object of the first importance. The canal policy of the State of New York has been called, by good authority, the political history of that State, and well would it now be for us had commercial advancement been the prominent object of our political leaders. If a tithe of the praiseworthy efforts, so perseveringly made for constitutional government and rotation in office, had been directed to the abolition of the commercial restrictions, and the development of the trade of the St. Lawrence, we would have long since enjoyed that commercial freedom for which we are now indebted to the self interest of the English manufacturer. Commercial prosperity will bear any amount of taxation, as in England, but to neglect, is to destroy it.

EARLY IMPROVEMENT OF THE ST. LAWRENCE.

The control of the St. Lawrence was absolutely in the hands of Lower Canada until 1822, and virtually so until the Union in 1841 ; and a mistaken policy for many years seems to have governed the action of those by whom her commerce was directed. The Lachine Canal was the only object of government solicitude, and above £100,000 were advanced by the Legislature for this work between 1822 and 1829. The dimensions were those of a boat canal, and the extension of a military work on a similar scale by the Ottawa and Rideau routes to Kingston, diverted public attention for some time from the idea of improving the main channel. The superior wealth and population of

the Lower Province should have thrown the initiation of the great work upon the elder sister, but the possession of the Rideau route, and those unfortunate "military considerations" which have ever been a bar to our advancement, had nearly succeeded in inducing the belief that the use of our noble river must be foregone, because the occupants of its opposite banks *might some day* destroy their common feeder.

A more unfavorable supposition is, that the grand scale upon which Upper Canada had constructed the Welland Canal, and the one she proposed for the St. Lawrence, induced the Lower Canadian Legislature to discourage a project which might open the lakes to the ocean, and destroy the transhipment in the Lower Province. This charge the Upper Canada Commissioners of 1825 did not hesitate to advance;—but without being uncharitable, we may be no more than just in saying, that Lower Canada both counted too much upon the necessities of the Upper Province, and undervalued that growing commerce around the borders of the Western Lakes, which has not only long since eclipsed the whole export and import trade of Montreal and Quebec, but has exceeded in value the entire foreign export trade of the United States from all her seaports.

The military canals on the Ottawa were commenced upon a scale similar to that of the canal then building at Lachine, and designed for boats of about 100 tons burthen. After three locks (upon the Grenville section) had been constructed upon this plan, the scale was enlarged to that of double the capacity, or for boats of 200 tons burthen,—and the locks widened for the passage of steamers. These three small locks still exist, *within* a chain of upwards of forty larger ones, completely neutralizing all the advantages of the enlargement;—a standing monument both of

Imperial centralization, and the misdirection or impotence of Colonial influence,—and a vindication of the subsequent Provincial expenditure upon the St. Lawrence. Another prime cause of the failure of the Ottawa and Rideau routes, is the necessity for the employment of steam power in a navigation so absurdly insignificant. The light draught of water, (four and a half feet) and the size of the Grenville locks necessarily involved transshipment both at Kingston and Montreal. The absence of a towing path threw the forwarding in the hands of large companies; the descending trade, (by far the greatest proportion) followed the rapids of the St. Lawrence, and the returning craft could only be brought back by steamboat proprietors. This system, requiring extensive arrangements and large capital, unavoidably gave rise to monopoly, which, while it enriched the forwarders, rapidly built up the Erie Canal. If the Rideau Canal had been executed upon a scale such as would have permitted the passage of craft navigating the Lakes, or if it had been provided like the Erie Canal with a towing path, so that every shipper who could command a pair of horses might go on his way rejoicing, we should in all probability not have had the St. Lawrence works at this day. There is however no cause of regret upon this score; the money was as well expended “for military purposes” as it would have been elsewhere;—and it is very doubtful whether the route could long have afforded water enough to supply an extended trade.

In 1827, Lower Canada took stock to the extent of £25,000 in the Welland Canal, then in the course of construction,—a step which reflected equal credit upon the liberality of the Legislature and the perseverance of the

applicant; and in 1831 she voted £10,201 "to enable batteaux and durham-boats to go up the Cascades," &c. In 1833, when Upper Canada, having overcome the Falls of Niagara by means of the Welland Canal, was engaged in removing the only formidable obstacle within her jurisdiction to a junction with the ocean,—by the construction of the Cornwall Canal—Lower Canada appointed a commission to report upon the propriety of seconding the efforts of the Upper Province—and here the matter ended; no money was granted, and the subsequent troubles in that Province adjourned the subject until the Union.

WELLAND CANAL.

Upper Canada, shortly after the termination of the late American war, turned her attention to the improvement of the St. Lawrence, her position and the disputes between the two Provinces—respecting the apportionment of the duties on imports by sea—naturally promoting a desire to break her way out to the seaboard. Between 1818 and 1824, the Legislature granted £4,000 for a survey of the obstructed portions of the St. Lawrence within her jurisdiction, and in the latter year the Welland Canal Company was chartered.

This famous undertaking was originated in 1818 by a few inhabitants of the Niagara district, who levelled the ridge which divides the waters emptying into the St. Lawrence above and below the Falls of Niagara. There were then present no high official personages, no celebrated engineers,—distinguished commercial or political leaders; all but one were inhabitants of the Township of Thorold, farmers and country traders,—the recent comrades of the gallant Brock. They had

before them no successful precedent;—a people four times as numerous, and commanding the trade of that Atlantic which scarce one of these Canadian schemers had ever seen, were just commencing the Erie Canal. There was then but one steamer upon Lake Erie;—Huron and Michigan were known only to the Indian and the fur-trader:—Buffalo, a city of 40,000 souls, was then a village, and Chicago and Milwaukie were yet “in the womb of time.” The whole commerce above Niagara, upon 50,000 square miles of water with 3000 miles of coast, employed but forty sail, two only of which exceeded one hundred tons. Yet in that feeble and unostentatious commencement we trace the origin of that policy which has since broken down the barriers, interposed by nature, between the commercial intercourse of central North America and the world: and the unassuming actors have lived to see hundreds of floating palaces propelled by steam, and five hundred sail ploughing “the world of waters” in the West. They have seen the tonnage of 1818 increased a thousand-fold,—the population around the lakes thrice doubled,—and an emigration of gold seekers sailing in a lake-built brig, two-thirds the circuit of the globe—to colonize the old conquests of Spain.

In 1833,—after having extended the navigation of the St. Lawrence nearly 1000 miles into the interior by the opening of the Welland Canal,—Upper Canada voted £70,000 for the improvement of the River between Prescott and the eastern boundary of the Province; this being an object, “highly important to the agricultural and commercial interests of this Province,” as stated in the preamble to the Act; and in 1834 the Legislature authorized a loan of the munificent sum of £350,000 for this.

purpose, and dictated the grand dimensions of 200 feet by 55 feet breadth for the locks, with not less than nine feet of water. In 1837 the canal mania reached its height in the Upper Province; £245,000 additional stock was authorized for the permanent completion of the Welland Canal, the wooden locks of which were rapidly giving way:— and in the session of that year the enormous sum of £930,000 was voted by Upper Canada, for internal improvements. These magnificent “resolves” were rendered in a great measure nugatory by the political crisis which followed shortly after.

Upon the Union of the Provinces in 1841, at the first session, £1,319,182 sterling was voted for the St. Lawrence and Welland Canals, Burlington Bay Canal and harbours upon the lakes, and upwards of £350,000 sterling for other internal improvements. The favourable report of the committee,—in which the grant* for the improvement of the St. Lawrence was contained,—was secured by the

* Mr. Harrison, in 1841, after providing £844,000 for canals, harbours, slides, light-houses, and roads, moved the following “go by” for the St. Lawrence:—

Resolved—That so soon as a loan of not less than £500,000 can be negotiated and obtained by the Government of this Province from any private company or companies, at a reduced rate of interest, the improvement of the navigation of the River St. Lawrence should also be undertaken and completed.

Mr. Merritt proposed the following resolutions:—

Resolved—That the Great Lakes of Canada and the River St. Lawrence form the natural outlet to the Ocean for the countries situated on their waters, and afford great advantages for commercial communication with distant countries.

Resolved—That the completion of this canal (St. Lawrence) would confer the greatest advantages on the greatest number of the inhabitants of Canada, and would be mutually beneficial to all; and it is therefore the opinion of this House that a loan of £500,000 be authorized to be raised by Debentures payable in twenty years, bearing an interest not exceeding five per cent, payable half-yearly in London.”

leader of that party who—upon the Thorold ridge upwards of twenty years before, had projected the commercial obliteration of the Falls of Niagara. The grant for the continuation of the St. Lawrence Canals had been left out of the above appropriation, and the fate of that navigation then hung upon a single vote and that at first was adverse; although the Journals present no record of the struggle, a battle was fought in committee over prostrate Canadian commerce with varying success, and was eventually won after more than one repulse, by that same indomitable energy, patience, and perseverance, which carried to successful completion the Welland Canal. The resolutions offered, rejected, amended and re-offered, in that committee were *the* “resolutions of 1841” although not those to which only political training has directed the public mind to the exclusion of more practical subjects; and which, however excellent in themselves, give stones where the people want bread,—more government instead of facilities of intercourse—political fictions instead of matter of fact markets. That great measure which was to connect Cleveland with California was then, and has been since, apparently a matter of less moment than the political gladiatorship of rival lawyers, who can shelve their differences nowhere but upon the millennial bench:—for, while the contents of the Provincial treasury have been poured out like water, for “political considerations,” the completion of our canals has, by rival administrations, been unnecessarily and criminally postponed from year to year.

CHARACTER OF THE ST. LAWRENCE NAVIGATION.

It is well known that there exists a broad difference between the scale of the improvements which connect

Prescott and Montreal and those between Lakes Erie and Ontario. The locks upon the Welland Canal are 150 feet in length of chamber, by a width of $26\frac{1}{2}$ feet, while those upon the St. Lawrence Canals have 200 feet length of chamber, and a width not less than 45 feet :—the available draught of water in both navigations may be taken at nine feet. This difference has been the cause of some criticism, and regrets have been expressed that the locks upon the Welland had not been constructed upon a scale of equal magnitude with those on the St. Lawrence Canals. These regrets we venture to say are premature ; nor, with the experience of subsequent years, can any important improvement in this respect be now suggested. The locks upon the Cornwall Canal are fifty-five feet wide :—after the Union, this width for the other works was very properly reduced by ten feet ; because every additional foot in width adds to the weakness, expense, and difficulty of management of the gates, besides delay in filling and passing the lock ; while it also involves a corresponding increase of sectional area throughout the trunk of the canal. Upon the Welland Canal there is a towing path for the employment of horse power, but upon the St. Lawrence the use of steam between the different canals became indispensable, on account of the current, and the distance of the channel (caused by the occasional intervention of islands and shoals) from the shore. A lock therefore which admits a serviceable tug-boat, of a sufficient size to afford space for engine and boilers, and reasonable proportion of freight and passengers, will fulfil the conditions required upon this route ; and for this purpose we believe the present provision to be ample. To have proposed a navigation which should embrace all the requirements of perfected

steam transportation, would have been as preposterous as vain. The model of the swiftest steamer is a problem yet unsolved in naval architecture ; the dimensions have already exceeded 400 feet in length by seventy feet beam, and the extension seems limited only by the breadth of the waters on which they turn. In a few years Railroads will have superseded steamers for the transportation of mails,—and with the exception of a pleasure ride through the Rapids, the locomotive will have left nothing but emigrants, pork, flour, and lumber to the River.

The dimensions of the locks upon the Welland Canal are admirably adapted to the class of vessels most suitable and profitable for the Western Lakes. They will easily pass the best models of the Buffalo and Chicago traders, a description of craft which had been adopted as best suited to the lake navigation without any reference to this canal. Larger sailing craft cannot always obtain full freight or be conveniently worked in all places upon the lakes ; while the expense of construction, management and interest, while laid up or partially freighted, is proportionally greater. These locks are also adapted to a very efficient class of propellers, and a kind of paddle-wheel steamers, for freighting and immigrant passengers, known by the inelegant but descriptive name of “polly-wogs.” There does not here exist the same necessity for the use of powerful steamers and large locks as upon the St. Lawrence ; and inasmuch as the lockage of the Welland Canal is upwards of one hundred feet greater than that upon all the St. Lawrence Canals combined, it would have been impolitic and extravagant to have constructed unwieldy steamboat locks, for a trade nine tenths of which will be carried on in craft which would not have half filled

those locks. By reason of the great lockage (three hundred and thirty feet) the time now required, would, in filling and managing steamboat locks, have been doubled: while the confusion caused amongst so many smaller craft by the passage of these leviathans, and the precedence claimed by them, would be a standing nuisance to the navigation. The expense of gates, foundations, bridges, aqueducts, culverts, deep cuttings, and the whole excavated portion of the canal, would have been enhanced to an amount beyond our utmost means in order to obtain a navigation practically inferior to the existing one. Neither passengers nor expensive steamers could long have afforded one or two days detention in the twenty-eight miles of canal between the lakes; and the result would have been, what will now take place whenever it may become desirable to employ steam generally for freighting business,—viz., the sailing craft will be towed to the termini of the canal, and thence be transferred from lake to lake by horse power. The steamers would not enter, because they are not profitable *carriers* of freight in a canal; nevertheless they will *tow* ten barrels where they only carry one.

The depth of water provided for in the St. Lawrence and Welland Canals is ample, being more than is afforded in many of the harbours upon the upper lakes, more than there is over the St Clair flats, and as much as the general features of the St. Lawrence navigation will warrant.

EARLY TRADE OF THE ST. LAWRENCE.

Having taken an imperfect but indispensable glance at the progress and character of our artificial navigation, we proceed to review the early trade of the St. Lawrence, its

conduct and vicissitudes, and the commercial policy under which it flourished, flagged or receded,—before we can hope to present anything like a clear view of the causes which have led to its present apparent inferiority, or be able to determine its future prospects.

A wise and liberal policy was adopted with regard to our exports previous to 1822 :—the products of either bank of the St. Lawrence were indifferently exported to the sister colonies as if of Canadian origin, and those markets received not only our own, but a large share of American breadstuffs and provisions. Our timber was not only admitted freely into the British markets, but excessive and almost prohibitory duties were imposed upon importations of this article from the Baltic, for the purpose of fostering Canadian trade and British shipping. The British market was closed by prohibition against our wheat until 1814, which was then only admitted when the price in England rose to about two dollars per bushel,—a privilege in a great measure nugatory ; but the West Indies and Lower Provinces gave a sufficient demand so long as the free export of American produce was permitted by this route. As early as 1793 our exports of flour and wheat, by the St. Lawrence, were as high as 100,000 barrels, and rose in 1802 to 230,000 barrels. The Berlin and Milan decrees and English Orders in Council thereon, of 1807,—President Jefferson's embargo of 1808,—with increased duties levied upon Baltic timber, gave an impulse to the trade of the St. Lawrence, so that the tonnage arriving at Quebec in 1810 was more than 1000 per cent greater than in 1800. The war of 1812 and 1815 naturally checked a commerce so much dependant upon the Americans, and we therefore find but little increase of the tonnage arrived in 1820, over

that of 1810. In 1822, the Canada Trade Acts of the Imperial Parliament, by imposing a duty upon American agricultural produce entering the British American Colonies and the West Indies, destroyed one-half of the export trade of the St. Lawrence ; and the simultaneous abundance of the English harvest forbade our exports thither.

As a recompense for the damage done by the Trade Act of 1822, our flour and wheat, in 1825, were admitted into the United Kingdom at a fixed duty of five shillings sterling per quarter. The opening of the Erie and Champlain Canals, at this critical juncture, gave a permanent direction to those American exports which had before sought Quebec, and an amount of injury was inflicted upon the St. Lawrence, which would not have been reached, had the British action of 1825 *preceded* that of 1822. The accidental advantages, resulting from the differences which arose between the United States and Britain, on the score of reciprocal navigation (which differences led to the interdiction of the United States export trade to the West Indies, and reduced it from a value of £500,000 in 1826, to less than £500 in 1830,) restored for a time our ancient commerce. The trade of the St. Lawrence was also assisted by the readmission, *free*, in 1826, (after four years exclusion) of American timber and ashes for the British market, and by the reduction of the duty upon our flour, for the West India market, and therefore rapidly recovered, and in 1830, far surpassed its position of 1820.

In 1831, there was a complete return to the policy, which existed previous to 1822. United States products of the forests and agriculture, were admitted into Canada *free*, and could be exported thence as Canadian produce

to all countries, except the United Kingdom : and an additional advantage was conferred by the imposition of a differential duty, in our favour, upon foreign lumber entering the West Indian and South American possessions. Our exports of flour and wheat by sea in that year, were about 400,000 barrels,—chiefly to Britain where a scarcity then existed—and for the first time exceeding the flour export of 1802 : this amount, in consequence of a demand nearer home and the ravages of the fly in Lower Canada, was not again exceeded until 1844. Between 1832 and 1839, a scarcity and great demand for bread-stuffs arose in the United States,—and the crops in England being unusually abundant between 1831 and 1836, the order of things in the St. Lawrence was reversed, so that in 1833 wheat was shipped from Britain to Quebec. A further supply came also from Archangel. These imports, in 1835 and 1836 amounted to about 800,000 bushels :—a similar demand in 1829, had turned our exportation of bread-stuffs inland, to a very large amount;—yet notwithstanding these fluctuations of our exports, the shipping and commerce of the St. Lawrence rapidly increased in importance and value with no continued relapse down to the year 1842. The revulsion in 1842 was general, being one of those periodical crises which affect commerce, but was aggravated in Canada by a repetition of the measures of 1822, not confined this time to the provision trade only, but attacking the great staple of Quebec—timber. The duties on Baltic timber, in Britain, were reduced—the free importation of American flour was stopped by the imposition of a duty thereon, and our trade with the West Indies annihilated by the reduction of the duty upon American flour brought into those islands. By imposing a duty of two shillings

sterling per barrel, upon American flour imported into Canada, and reducing it in the West Indies from five to two shillings, an improvement equal to five shillings sterling per barrel, was made in the new position of American flour exported from the Mississippi, Baltimore, and New York. The value of our trade with the West Indies in 1830 (during the exclusion of the Americans) amounted to £226,500, and in 1846, it was £1,010!

Our export to the Lower Provinces, (Nova Scotia New Brunswick, Cape Breton, &c.,) was at its highest point in 1836, since which time it has fluctuated, but never reached its position of that year. It will be remembered that at that time the Americans were importing breadstuffs and could not therefore compete with Quebec in the supply of these Provinces. The Act of 1842 was nearly as destructive to our trade with the Gulf Provinces as with the West Indies, but since the opening of our canals, there is a marked increase in this trade. In 1841, (before the passing of the Gladstone Act) our export trade with the Lower Provinces was worth £114,000 annually, which amount fell off to £51,000 in 1844. In 1845 the enlarged Welland and Beauharnois Canals were opened, and since that period it has gradually recovered, so that since the opening of the enlarged Lachine Canal it has exceeded its position of 1841, and is now increasing every year. As the interruption of our trade with the West Indies by the Canada Trade Act, in 1822, was followed in 1825, by the permanent admission of our breadstuffs into the British market, and by the concessions in 1826,—so its second interruption, or rather destruction, in 1842, was succeeded in 1843, by the important privilege of exporting American wheat, received under a comparatively nominal duty, as Canadian without

proof of origin, to the British market. This measure was a virtual premium of about six shillings sterling per quarter upon American exports to Britain through the St. Lawrence, but inasmuch as it was an indirect blow at the English Corn Laws, it contained—like a bomb-shell,—the elements of its own destruction, and was “too good to last.” This very partial measure rapidly swelled our exports of flour and wheat, so that in 1846, over half a million of barrels and as many bushels of these two staples were shipped from Canada by Sea.

The injury threatened to the timber trade of the St. Lawrence, by the Act of 1842, was averted by the subsequent railway demand in England, so that our exports of this article have been greater since that period than before.

In 1846, steps were taken in the British Legislature which led to the withdrawal of that preference, which the St. Lawrence had so fitfully enjoyed as the route for American exports to England; and the new system came into full operation in 1849. The intermediate demand, resulting from the failure of the potato crop, has thrown much uncertainty upon the final tendency of this important change in our relations with the Mother Country; and as a necessary consequence the ancient system of “Ships, Colonies and Commerce,” has fallen to the ground. In 1847, the control of our Customs was abandoned by the Imperial Legislature, and the last and most important measure, which has relieved us from the baneful effects of the British Navigation Laws, came into operation with the commencement of the present year.

We now, in common with all foreigners, pay one shilling sterling, per quarter of eight bushels, upon all wheat and flour we export to England, and twenty per cent upon

that which goes to the United States ; thus assailed by “ a fire in front and rear,” we must go manfully into the markets of the world, through the St. Lawrence, and make our custom valuable by forcing our customers to *follow* it. The “ nominal ” duty in the British market is greater than was the whole freight of a barrel of flour from New York to Liverpool in October last—greater than all our canal tolls levied from Chicago to the Ocean, and within one penny of the estimated freight of a barrel from Buffalo to New York through the enlarged Erie Canal. If it should become part of the new order of things to admit the produce of colonies *free* into the markets of the United Kingdom, this privilege would, since the abrogation of the Navigation Laws and the opening of our canals, be almost as decided a premium upon the St. Lawrence route as the tariff of 1845 :—but if it were to restore our ancient lethargy, it would be of very questionable importance, and it could only now be *occasionally* valuable, on account of the comparatively light duties and the lighter freights on supplies from Continental Europe.

It has been our misfortune in these commercial vicissitudes, to have been in every case the subjects of cure rather than of prevention ; and it is not difficult to imagine the effect which the *circulating* policy of the Imperial Parliament, in the Acts of 1822, 1825, 1826, 1828, 1831, 1833, 1842, 1845, 1846 and 1849, must have had upon the many who have been twenty-five years in business, and have witnessed all these changes. Could any permanent investment in Canadian trade or commerce be expected ? And thus, after half a century of exportation, we find ourselves—free indeed of the many injurious commercial trammels, yet with scarcely any Canadian shipping, and our trade

conducted by branches of transatlantic houses:—we are discharged from the custody of the Navigation Laws, and the false security of protection, and now enjoy that empty liberty which the pauper feels when driven away from the workhouse door. Had our commercial freedom preceded our commercial abandonment—had we enjoyed, for a few years, an unfettered commerce before protection expired, men's minds would not have been so unhinged as they now seem to be; but on looking back upon what we have passed through, and *how* we have passed through it, we will venture the assertion, that few reflecting men, of whatever shade of political feeling, will desire the return of the old system of alternate protection and restriction, attraction and repulsion, and vacillating legislation. The Navigation Laws and the British Possessions Acts *regulated* our trade, by confining it to British bottoms, whereof the master and three-fourths of the crew must be British subjects. Trade with Asia and the Cape of Good Hope was interdicted for the benefit of the East India Company. We could not send our salted provisions into any British possession. We could not bring from any foreign country tea, sugar, coffee, or manufactured articles. No foreign ship could bring us a cargo unless that ship were built in, owned in, and sailed by a master and three-fourths of a crew, the subjects of that country—proof of all which was exacted: neither could any foreign ship take a cargo from us, unless owned, built and sailed as above, and unless a bond and sureties were given that the cargo would be taken directly to the country to which the ship belonged, and not landed, increased, or diminished on the voyage. The same restrictions were placed upon our trade in British ships to foreign Europe and Africa. Goods imported

in foreign vessels were liable to increased duties, and our importations from foreign countries were confined to a schedule of enumerated articles, from which tea, coffee, sugar, salted meats and fish, wines, spirits, spices, silks, leather, salt, molasses, iron and hardware, crockery, coal, glass and glassware, rigging, machinery, books, butter, cheese, lard, steel, metal, and minerals, *types*, paints and oil, tools and furniture even, the property of immigrants, and manufactures of all kinds whether of cotton, linen or wool, iron, earth or wood, were rigorously excluded.—British coal, brought as ballast to Quebec, was not permitted to be reexported. In 1825, some relaxation in this respect was made, but as a set off, an abatement of ten per cent of duty was allowed in favour of foreign articles imported from the British Warehouses; other concessions were made from time to time, but the principal restrictions remained in full force down to the Act of 1842. It is marvellous that any amount of protection, or any ingenuity in legislation, could keep in existence a trade so hampered. Yet the past commerce of the St. Lawrence presents a steady and satisfactory progress in the face of disadvantages which have perhaps more than counterbalanced its eccentric protection. Reviewing its trade since the maintenance of peace, we find that in 1820 the tonnage entering the river amounted to 150,000. Between 1820 and 1830, the operation of the Trade Acts,—the imposition of a duty of ten shillings sterling per load upon our timber, and a reduction of thirteen shillings sterling per load upon that from the Baltic,—the opening of the Erie and Champlain Canals, and a bad harvest in 1823, were all against our commerce; yet the tonnage increased fifty per cent, while the corresponding increase at New York, in this period, was fifty-

eight per cent. Between 1830 and 1840, the ravages of the wheat-fly in Lower Canada, the re-admission of the Americans into the West India markets, the unusually abundant crops in England, between 1831 and 1836, the scarcity and non-export of American produce between 1832 and 1839, and our own political troubles, operated against the trade of the St. Lawrence; yet the increase of tonnage was nearly one hundred per cent against less than sixty per cent at New York. Since 1840, our staples of flour and timber have received the finishing touches of Imperial legislation, yet we do not doubt that the returns of 1850 will shew a decided increase over our position in 1840; and having happily for the future no contingencies of convulsive legislation to fright or ruin us, we may settle down upon a system of sound and enduring prosperity, as lasting as the fertility of our soil and the perseverance of intelligent, self-controlled industry.

The Navigation Laws and Possessions Acts, by the restrictions imposed upon Colonial trade, of course discouraged Colonial shipping; and by confining our imports and exports to a certain class of vessels—not one of which were within the St. Lawrence between the first of January and the first of May, gave a monopoly of our freights to a limited number of vessels engaged in our trade. Secure of our freights, these vessels did not seek cargoes elsewhere, and as they could only make two voyages in the season, they placed the annual expense and profits of their shipping upon the two Canadian cargoes home. So long however as our imports were limited to our own consumption, it was plain that our timber and flour had to pay four-fifths of the expense of the voyage out and home. The admission of foreign vessels would have afforded occasional

relief; but, in the unimproved state of the river above Montreal, this disadvantage must have continued to keep up our freights and reduce our exports. A very different state of things now exists:—that market, and that destination, which bring many of the goods and the passengers of European countries to the shores of America, lie within the valley, and upon the Western confines of the St. Lawrence; and since the opening of our canals can be approached more easily and cheaply by Quebec, than through any other quarter:—and it is only necessary to refer to the arrival of seven Bremen vessels in the St. Lawrence, during the temporary suspension of the Navigation Laws in 1847, to perceive in what direction European emigration will hereafter approach the West.

Our view of the commerce of the St. Lawrence has been hitherto confined to the effect produced upon it by Imperial legislation. As the nature of our commercial relations with the United States exerted an important influence on the trade of the St. Lawrence, we will glance at its progress and fluctuations, and our Colonial legislation thereon. Our regular trade with the United States originated in the treaty signed at London in 1794: and in 1801 a uniform tariff was necessarily adopted by our two legislatures. This trade was confined to the natural productions of the United States—the “Possessions” and “Trade” Acts for a long time prohibiting tea, and many other articles, by importation inland. To encourage exports of United States products through the St. Lawrence, free importation of these articles was permitted, without any regulations or restrictions, until the Canada Trade Act of the Imperial Parliament, in 1822, imposed duties thereon.

In 1820, however, Upper Canada imprudently placed a high protective duty on United States products, except for exportation, and a very onerous tonnage duty of one shilling on American vessels, at the same time relieving British vessels of a light house tonnage duty of only threepence. This latter imposition was removed by the Imperial Government in 1825, when tonnage duties were made reciprocal ; and in the same year, inland importation was permitted of all goods which might be imported by sea from foreign countries—that is of the “enumerated” articles. After free importation of the produce of the forest and bread-stuffs was again permitted in 1831, the local legislatures, taught by experience, did not again place any checks upon the St. Lawrence trade until after the Union,—when the Imperial Act of 1842 imposed a duty on United States produce, which we imitated in the next year “for the protection of agriculture,”—flour and wheat excepted ; and both in the tariffs of 1847 and 1849 this principal is adopted, and we have now imposed a duty of about twenty per cent upon United States agricultural products,—wheat and corn only excepted.

AGRICULTURAL PROTECTION.

This agricultural protection in Canada is, we fear, a dangerous error. The object of protection is to encourage the production of any article of which we have a deficient supply. Coals do not require protection in Newcastle, or cod in Newfoundland. If protection would raise the price of our flour in British or foreign markets, then would it be most desirable, but inasmuch as it will surely raise the cost of transport of our own produce to those markets,—by driving American exports from the St. Lawrence,—it

will, by just so much, reduce its value *here*. We produce a great deal more breadstuffs than we consume ; this surplus thrown upon our market establishes the price of all that is consumed, and no amount of protection can vary this unless a demand for export arises, under which there will be no importation, and no need of protection. If we have a famine in Canada,—the only case in which protection could take effect,—as the agriculturists form four-fifths of the population, it is not to be supposed that they would be exempt from the visitation ; or that custom regulations, under such circumstances, could (with our frontier) be efficient. We have no desire to view the question upon “general principles,” but as a local one. In all human probability, for the average of many years to come, we shall have a large amount of breadstuffs for sale, and the question is, where and how can we sell it to the best advantage? The St. Lawrence offers us access to the markets of the world since our canals have been constructed ; but, from the lingering effect of commercial maltreatment, the superior facilities of wealthier and better supported routes, and some disadvantages on the score of winter shipments, our own limited commerce is insufficient to keep open this mighty highway. The regular trader, which arrives at Montreal, brings the property of many shippers, who, by combining together, get their goods brought out at a much less expense than if only part of a cargo could be found ; the more of these ships which arrive, the greater competition will there be in the carriage of our surplus produce to its markets ;—and the greater the amount of produce the larger will be the number of arrivals, as the ships will be more certain of a return cargo. With the increase of shipping, additional light-

houses, tug-boats, and buoys will follow, and thus insurances will be reduced, delays diminished, and greater safety ensured. The larger the trade, the greater will be the employment of a steam power, in which feature the St. Lawrence must distance all her rivals. It is evident that this great highway cannot be "kept in repair" by our trade alone. It was never designed by nature for this selfish end: our canals were not built for Canada, but for the *valley of the St. Lawrence*; we ought therefore to "club together" with our neighbours, on the opposite side in order to place this noble outlet in the most efficient state, by giving it as large a support as possible. Free admission of American produce for exportation only, will not attract it from a route where no custom house nuisances, and no *delay* on this score exist. An exclusive policy will certainly recoil upon ourselves, for we are too poor in capital to purchase a tithe of what is needed to "stock" the St. Lawrence and control the business of the North and West.

Our agriculture has long since outgrown protection—it is a dominant, instead of a subordinate interest; yet by an apparent contradiction, in becoming so, it has become dependent upon another interest yet in its infancy—that of our commerce,—the destiny of which is in the hands of our agriculturists. The "home" price and the export demand are to be established by our canals and our shipping; and it remains for those most interested in that price and that demand, to say whether the efficiency of their recently improved and only national highway, is to be impaired by hampering any of its furniture.

Whilst we were a colony in the commercial sense, the superior value of our flour and the demand for all our surplus in the British market, kept up the price for home

consumption here at the highest point. There were, therefore, many occasions in which the free importation of American produce might have reduced our prices, if there had not been the English demand for more than all imported; yet we have seen, that, as a people, we have flourished most from that policy under which the least restrictions between the commerce of the two sides of the St. Lawrence were interposed. American produce, for years to come, will not again seek Canada, unless *en route* for some better market, and a high future price of breadstuffs in this country, will be the result only of scarcity; or of our connecton with other and more eastern markets.

As our present position is a peculiar and critical one—struggling, with great natural facilities, against a powerful rival—"general principles," or theories, should be avoided; *general* protection, therefore, however desirable it might become, when the commerce of the St. Lawrence is established, and our complete independence of the New York canals achieved,—would now produce general prostration. The building up of a home market must be the work of years, and during its infancy abundance and cheapness of food will be indispensable. Our own market is too limited to indulge the expectation, that any protective inducements we could offer, would soon bring about any considerable immigration of operatives and consumers; and protection, without this result, would only have the effect of reducing our production, or of maintaining us in the position of tribute-payers to the Erie Canal. General protection must include our marine, and it would, incidentally, so affect foreign goods *in transitu*, as to perpetuate the present aversion to the St. Lawrence route. Let not our farmers therefore be inveigled into any "general" system, to which

they, forming four-fifths of the body politic, are sure to become the victims.

We have advocated a free commercial system with regard to our exports and intercourse with the opposite bank of the St. Lawrence, upon special grounds, and not from any sympathy with those extreme principles of some commercial philosophers,—that commercial *communisme* which would tax civilization for the support of barbarism—which would draw no distinction between the bondmen and the free, and drive our sons and our daughters to seek employment in Iowa, Oregon and California.

Fortunately, “free trade” and “protection” have not yet become in Canada war-cries, to gull electors and fatten the elected: and we trust that patriotism, and the mutual respect of parties, will dictate that spirit of compromise which is the leaven of all good government. We believe there is a freedom of commercial intercourse which need not be unlicensed, and an encouragement of native industry, *when judiciously directed*, not incompatible with each other, or with the “interests of Canada, as an agricultural country.” Whatever disinterested advice we may receive from the philosophers of the Manchester school, we cannot fail to perceive that we are already a surplus *food* producing people, that our most easily cultivated lands are taken up—that the want of a local market and superabundant capital forbids the cultivation of the richer and more expensively tilled soils—that our most valuable population, the native-born adults of both sexes, are wandering off where good land is more plenty and cheaper, or hard labour better rewarded. By industry and thrift we may recover from the effects of temporary calamities, but when the young and vigorous, the enterprising, intelligent, and *ini-*

tiated portion of our population abandon the country they have been reared in, and which they are the best qualified to develop, she is indeed bereaved. Any policy, therefore, which offers a reasonable prospect of extending the variety of our occupations, should be received upon its own merits, without reference to its clashing with a "principle;"—but the utmost caution is required to prevent our defeating the object we have in view.

MANUFACTURING AND HOME MARKET.

If we had commenced a system of general protection *before* we became exporters of food, then might we have been now our own manufacturers, although we should have paid dearly for our patriotism; because, with a limited market and imperfect commercial facilities, we would have been badly supplied at extortionate rates. But as colonists, we could not become general manufacturers, nor as Canadians can we now become so, until we have greater commercial facilities,—railroads, and an efficient foreign and coasting marine, either of our own, or at our disposal. Manufactures cannot be profitably carried on upon a small scale; neither can the supply be so closely assimilated to the demand in any community, but that large accumulations will periodically occur, for which a safety-valve must be provided, in the shape of a foreign market. Therefore, if the commerce of the St. Lawrence is placed upon such a footing, that we can contest with the Americans, the supply with breadstuffs of the Gulf Provinces, the West Indies and South America, we may, *hereafter*, fill out our cargoes with manufactures from the St. Lawrence for the same destination. Then would our returning vessels bring back the drugs, dyes, and chemi-

cals required by the manufacturer, the raw hides from the Pampas, and the rare woods of the tropics ; and thus place us in a position to engage in these undertakings with similar facilities to those enjoyed by England and the United States. But it may be said that we can never compete with these nations: because in the first labour is cheaper—and in the second, it is “protected.” We would first observe that, although nothing could be more fatal to us than the present adoption of what is understood by a *general* protective policy—yet, for those peculiar articles, in the manufacture of which we could now profitably engage, it may become advisable to make such provision, as in the event of any of those revulsions which periodically overtake the commerce of every country, would prevent the annihilation of our growing manufactures. No excessive or prohibitory tariff, for the purpose of protection, could be of any avail upon a frontier like our own. A moderate, and therefore permanent, encouragement—for those manufactures only which require little manual labour, and of which we produce the raw material,—is all that could be attempted and would tend most to the manufacturers’ true interest ; because high tariffs produce ruinous local competition, and invite attacks which are sure to be made, and a crisis must then ensue. In England, when a manufacturing crisis occurs, the accumulated stocks are forced out suddenly upon the markets of the world, and in such quantities, that in young and weak systems of new countries like this, the ruin of incipient manufactures would be inevitable. This might not be alone confined to the *chances* of trade,—for a deliberate policy would see, that a certain loss, occasionally submitted to by a combination of manufacturers, would be profitably incurred, if thereby

our market were continued at their mercy. Accordingly, after opposition has been thus nipped in the bud, upon returning prosperity, and a full demand, such prices would be dictated, to all dependent consumers, as would more than compensate for the loss by the former clever investment. This is no fictitious case. We have seen iron range from £4 10s. to £16, between 1842 and 1845, and English goods have been flooded, at prices below cost, upon the American markets, thereby checking the extension of manufactures in that country. That there are certain classes of manufactures, which we can profitably carry on, notwithstanding all that has been said about the superior cheapness of transatlantic labour, must be admitted, on looking at the many excellent cloth mills, tanneries, furnaces and foundries, the asheries, breweries and distilleries, soap, nail, chair, and pail factories, oil and paper mills, potteries, machine shops, and many other establishments, which have sprung up without any other encouragement than those most important ones, which we offer to every branch of manufactures, viz: abundance of cheap food and water power, a local market, low rents, and a healthy and invigorating climate. And there are many more which we could have at once, were we in possession of the requisite enterprise, such as rope walks, wire works, copper manufactures, white lead and paint works, and an extension of our oil mills, candle factories, &c., and more particularly all manufactures of wood,—cabinet ware and turners' work,—and lastly, *ice*. The quality of our iron and the cheapness of carcoal offer every facility for the manufacture of *steel*. These manufactures flourish here because we produce the raw material, and because the expense of transportation and the oppor-

tunity for barter are in themselves a protection and an advantage over foreign supplies. Iron we could advantageously produce; our ores are of the finest description, and as we must now use charcoal, the quality would be equal to Swedes'; the inferior though cheaper English article would not come into competition with it, because, in iron the better article is generally the cheaper.

Cotton we could procure either from Tennessee, by continuous water communication through Cincinnati and Cleveland, or from South Carolina by Quebec or New York; and it could be laid down on any part of the St. Lawrence as cheap as at the mills in New England. The coarser manufactures of this article we might profitably engage in, for in these but a small proportion of labour enters into the cost, the water power and machinery doing the most of the work. In this description of goods the Americans have supplanted the English in India; and British officers serving there, now wear the Yankee drills.

We need not envy the coal of England or Pennsylvania, the chief use of which in manufactures is to produce steam power, because we have a cheaper and more regular power in the countless falls and rapids of our many rivers; and for the manufacture of iron, in the composition of which coal enters so largely, we have seen that with our boundless forests we have a supply of charcoal which is far more valuable for this purpose. The pig-iron manufactured upon the Ohio river, where mineral coal is cheaper than wood, is, for the reasons above mentioned, made from charcoal where it can be obtained.

We have a population in Eastern Canada naturally intelligent and easily controlled, but who are, for one-half of the year, eating almost the bread of idleness:—and we

cannot expect to attain the same wealth and prosperity as our neighbours, unless we rise as early, work as hard, and husband our resources as carefully as they do. With an increasing population, who have long since commenced to emigrate, with abundant food, unlimited water power, the noblest river and the finest canals in the world, Canada, commanding the seaboard, must become the commercial factor for an important portion of interior America, and in due time a manufacturing country,—but we trust never one in which the agricultural interest shall be subordinate; where the husbandman, struggling in that vocation to which Providence has called him,—the first and most natural employment of man,—shall be told that his efforts *must be misdirected*. This is “an axiom” as difficult of adoption as the undisputed, but unnoticed, Golden Rule of Christianity; and as irrefutable by a minority, as the arguments we have employed when we took from the Indian his hunting grounds, and proved (to our own satisfaction,) that he would be a happier man if he forsook his vagabond propensities and tilled the soil.

We have at this stage noticed the manufacturing position of Canada, both because we feel it impossible, in considering the future progress of our country, to separate the three sisters,—Agriculture, Manufactures, and Commerce; and because there is an opinion extant, that the navigation of the St. Lawrence is of less importance to us than the immediate establishment of a home market, by adopting a stringent protective policy. It will be seen that it is in no spirit of opposition to this home market, that we have taken ground against the *mode* only, by which it is proposed to be obtained. If our geographical position were that of Cuba, (or perhaps even of Nova Scotia,) so that our com-

merce could be uninterrupted, we would confidently rely upon its accumulations and facilities to produce in due time the requisite manufactures. But since it has pleased Providence to lay an embargo upon the former from December until May—thereby rendering it to a certain extent *chronic*—we foresee a future gradual resort to manufactures, in order to employ the idle months, as well as to support our commerce. The one cannot long flourish without the other—but as we must have Commerce *before* we can have Manufactures—all restrictions upon the infancy of that commerce, by needless and premature legislation, should be avoided.

This influence of position, man in pursuing his own interest must acknowledge and succumb to :—unintentionally, and almost insensibly, mutual commercial interests combine, and render obsolete paper systems of political Gamaliels, while yet the latter are chaffering over them. The drover, the pedler, the produce-dealer and the forwarder—unimportant parties in the eyes of the common politician—in seeking their own interests, do not look at the political tendency of their operations, but rear up unconsciously, quietly, but surely, a new system—as the coral insect, unheeded and unseen, builds up her submarine mountains, on which they who sail by old charts are cast away. Capital is not here sufficiently abundant or powerful to control labour ;—a practical people will therefore deal with all questions in a practical manner. That charity which begins at home, offers the first sacrifice upon the domestic altar, adopts that policy which gives the greatest material or present good, which supplies or appears to supply the greatest number of wants—shelters and supports the wife, clothes and educates the child, and provides against that

night of old age in which none can work. Such a "principle" must ultimately supersede any theory, sentiment, passion or prejudice whatever.

COMMERCIAL PROGRESS OF THE ST. LAWRENCE.

We have seen a rapid and substantial progress in the trade of the St. Lawrence, in the twenty years ending with 1840. In the *six* years following this, we exported more timber than in any previous *ten*; and up to the present time we have shipped by sea, since 1840, *four and a quarter millions* of barrels of wheat and flour—a quantity which exceeds, by more than one million of barrels, the total export of flour and wheat from the St. Lawrence, by sea, between the years 1800 and 1840. Notwithstanding, therefore, the loss of a portion of the protection upon our timber in 1842, and the whole of that upon our flour a few years later, we have no reason to be dissatisfied with the trade of the St. Lawrence for the decade ending in 1850. The great falling off, as it was called, in 1848, in our exports of flour and wheat, was little more than a natural reâction after the unparalleled exports of 1847, and need not be looked upon as alarming, since the exports of 1848 are greater than those in any year previous to 1844, with the single exception of 1841. That the decrease in 1848 was not permanent, is seen from the Montreal exports of 1844, which exhibit a satisfactory increase on the preceding year. The following shews the progress of the commerce of the St. Lawrence compared with New York:

Tonnage arrived at Quebec	and	New York, in
1819.....100,000		266,840
1829.....236,565		417,961
1839.....382,861		655,927
1849.....489,861 (in 1846...628,425)		Not known.

Compared with the commercial emporium of America this is a gratifying view, as the years taken are those unaffected by the stimulants or revulsions of trade, and give a fair average of the progress.

When we consider that, in addition to this position of our trade by the St. Lawrence, the inland commercial intercourse with the United States, in 1848 and 1849, has far exceeded that of former years—that in the last year we have shipped over a million and a half of bushels of wheat and flour to Oswego alone—we have reason to congratulate ourselves upon our ability to supply a foreign market; and at the same time to be somewhat solicitous about the future destination of this great and increasing surplus.

So long as flour, shipped from the St. Lawrence, enjoyed a preference in the English market of about one dollar per barrel over the same article when shipped from New York, this premium was sufficient to counterbalance the high freights which the exclusion of foreign vessels on the Atlantic, and the want of better communications and efficient competition on the river, had produced. This protection being withdrawn *before* the repeal of the navigation restrictions, and before the completion of our canals, our Western produce naturally tended toward New York, where prices were better than in Montreal, both on account of the diminished demand, (the effect of the glutted condition of the English markets after the famine of 1847, which made New York a better market,) and because the whole cost of sending a barrel of flour, from Western Canada to Liverpool, has hitherto been less *via* New York, than Montreal. This tendency of our wheat to the United States, in 1848 and 1849, has given rise to various specu-

lations as to the future course of our trade ; and it cannot be concealed, that serious misgivings are entertained respecting the value of our St. Lawrence Canals. Political opinions have been subverted by it—and we now appear in the humiliating condition of *petitioners* for reciprocity with the United States.

RECIPROCITY.

The advantages of a free access to the American market need no demonstration, but the readiest mode of obtaining it is a subject of much discussion. That it will become the interest of the United States to yield this privilege, we have no doubt—but that they will be brought to do so by *argument*, instead of by *action*, is we fear scarcely to be expected.

Canada is in a position to compel the Americans to open their ports to her produce,—and to exact tribute from the trade of the Western States ; and she owes this position wholly to the improvement of the St. Lawrence. Without her canals, she would be compelled to do, what Ohio, Michigan, Wisconsin and other Western States are now doing,—contribute to the support of the government and improvements of the State of New York ; with this additional disadvantage, that she would at all times have twenty per cent to pay toward the support of the general government of the United States. Our canals, by giving us an outlet to the ocean, will enable our flour to enter the same markets that are sought by the American article,—the export of which establishes the price for home consumption in that country and has hitherto given the preference to New York over the St. Lawrence. Under our colonial system, we were the sport of English seasons, and were

compelled to take the terms offered in the British market alone. The Americans, on the contrary, sent flour to England only when a paying price was obtained there. In 1845, they exported only 35,000 barrels of flour to England; 47,000 to Cuba; 53,000 to Hayti; 54,000 to the Danish West Indies; 209,000 to Brazil; 281,000 to the British West Indies; and 287,000 to the British North American Colonies. They also exported to the East Indies, China, Gibraltar, Cape of Good Hope, and the Pacific, and to nearly all the South American Provinces, and the Islands in the Caribbean sea.

The annual value of the American exports of breadstuffs, to other countries than Great Britain, is about \$10,000,000; nearly one-third of which is sent, as it were, under our noses, to the British Provinces at the mouth of the St. Lawrence. This latter trade the St. Lawrence Canals must at once transfer to Canada, as far as she is able to supply it, unless *legislation* forbids. The Nova Scotians are large ship-owners,—Halifax most favourably situated for an *entrepôt*, and our canals must release a large amount of capital, now locked up in winter, in the sailing marine of the lakes. It is not probable, therefore, that the Americans can long continue to exact twenty per cent discount upon the agricultural produce of Canada. If we do not carry on a direct trade ourselves with the Southern countries we have mentioned, the Blue-noses will do it for us, and—as a necessary consequence—they will supply us with the groceries and West India produce we now receive through the States. Where we sell there will we buy. As far as we require English goods we will export timber and flour to pay for them, and as much more as we can sell there; and the Americans will soon see, that to retain the portion

of our trade which they now possess, they must give us facilities for *selling* as well as for buying in their markets.

A war of tariffs or trade regulations we cannot now afford;—and a confession of weakness is not likely to further our object. We therefore believe that the speedy completion of our canals and perfecting of the river navigation, with a liberal commercial policy in at least the infancy of our trade, will be the readiest method of *obtaining* reciprocity, and of rendering us *independent* of it. The privilege of exporting through the United States, in bond, has given rise to unfavourable speculations with regard to the value of our canals;—but it should be remembered, that this privilege was not granted *until we had commenced* the improvement of the St. Lawrence; and never would have been conceded but for the purpose of weakening our efforts toward commercial self-emancipation. Its value to us is very problematical. Of the 200,000 barrels of Canadian flour sent in 1849 to Oswego, only five hundred were sold there, the remainder being bonded; and of the 620,000 bushels of wheat, 380,000 were bonded. Now if there were any real value to our farmers in this privilege of exporting in bond, we should have received very nearly as much for our flour and wheat at Toronto and Hamilton as was paid at Buffalo and Cleveland. But we got no more for it than if this privilege had not existed;—we were at the mercy of the American speculator; our good article of Canadian wheat was bonded, and an inferior article of Western wheat was substituted and exported as Canadian produce, whilst our finer grain was employed to improve the character of American brands.

The fear of a reaction in the English markets while produce is *in transitu*, will always tend to make the buyer pur-

chase at rates which will, in such case, permit him to fall back upon the American market by paying the duty. The customs regulations, trifling as they may at first appear, will be sufficient to check competition and send eastern purchasers to Ohio. From the experience of last year we should learn that any restrictions, however light, upon the free admission and transit of those articles which we ourselves export, will be sufficient to send them through other channels, and increase the cost of transport to our own.

Whether we obtain reciprocity or not, and whatever be our future commercial position with regard to the United States, our policy is the same, viz. to render ourselves speedily and permanently independent of all other routes, so long as we have one (under the control of our own legislation) which admits of being used. If the withholding of this concession on the part of the United States, for two or three years longer, should have the effect of arousing us to a proper sense of our position,—whatever pecuniary loss we might in the interval undergo would be a most valuable investment. If however we had the *entré* of the American markets to-morrow, the attendant advantages would be but imperfectly enjoyed without our St. Lawrence canals. If, as in 1847, a good demand existed on the seaboard, we would be the victims of an expensive and limited means of export, and nearly all the profit of that demand *would go to the forwarders and the State of New York*. In that year the cost of transport from Buffalo to Albany rose to two dollars per barrel, owing to the want of capacity in the Erie Canal.

Of the produce coming from, and merchandize going to Western States by the route of Syracuse, about one-third now goes by the way of the Welland Canal and Oswego ;

the other two-thirds by the way of Buffalo. Oswego is gaining so rapidly upon Buffalo in the strife for the western trade, as to leave very little room for doubting, that in a few years the greater part upward and downward would take the Oswego route,—*if sufficient facilities could be afforded it on that route.* A most significant fact is, that of the salt leaving Syracuse (the point of junction of the Oswego and Erie Canals) for the West, 56,000 tons went last year by the Oswego and Welland Canals, and only 19,000 by Buffalo. Had the remainder of the up freight started for the West, from Syracuse, (instead of from Albany *in Buffalo boats*) a greater portion of it would undoubtedly have gone by the Welland Canal. In 1840, Oswego had only one-sixth of the Western and Canada trade *up*, and one-seventh *down*. These proportions have now increased to one-half and one-fourth respectively; the receipts of western produce being greater now than they were at Buffalo in 1840; and, although in 1848 (after the enormous export of 1847) there was a *decrease* in those receipts at Buffalo, of 167,000 tons—there was at the same time an *increase* of 5,000 tons at Oswego.*

* The Auditor of the New York Canal Department, in the "Tolls, Trade and Tonnage" Report, published April 1850, says:—

"The tonnage of 1849 exceeds that of 1847 by 24,922 tons,—but the Tolls are \$366,716 *less*... .." much the most important consideration in connection with this subject, is the rapid diversion of Western trade, from Buffalo to Oswego. In the tonnage of 1849, there is a falling off, through Buffalo, of 124,880 tons, from that of 1847,—and at the same time an increase of 80,709 tons, at Oswego.

[The Western *tonnage* would rate the same, whether entered at Buffalo or Oswego—but in the latter case, the *tolls* would be less, by more than the amount charged upon the Welland Canal. The above increase at Oswego, arises chiefly from our Lake Ontario exports:—but the decrease through Buffalo, is nearly three times as great as that through the Welland Canal.]

Now if the Welland Canal, substituting twenty-eight miles of ship navigation for 154 of boating on the Erie, has produced the effect we have shewn upon the Western trade, what would it be if we could take the cargo which has passed the Welland, to Whitehall on Lake Champlain? thus substituting say twenty or forty miles more of ship navigation for about 130 of boating;—leaving only a boat navigation of less than seventy miles, with but fifty-five feet elevation to the summit above Champlain,—to reach tide water at the Hudson. Would we not inevitably secure to the St. Lawrence canals the same western trade *of the Americans* which now moves through the Welland Canal? Would not that flour which now passes through the Erie Canal and is carried by railway from Albany to Boston, pass down through the St. Lawrence canals to Burlington, and thence take the *two rival* railroads into the best market for breadstuffs upon this continent—the manufacturing districts of New England? The manufactures of those districts would then go West through our canals; and our vessels by thus going down, would draw up freights from Quebec and Montreal, New York and Boston, the whole of New England, and the manufacturing counties of Northern New York. The immediate construction of a canal from Lake Champlain to the St. Lawrence, the cost of which would not exceed £500,000, is an object of the most vital importance to us, as the proprietors of the St. Lawrence and Welland Canals, for it would secure the payment for, and support of our magnificent artificial navigation, chiefly by the transit of foreign trade; and leave us wholly independent of the result of the respective capabilities of, or rivalry between New York and Quebec. To us as agriculturists, it will become an object of far greater importance.

Lake Champlain, with a navigable communication of about 150 miles running due south, approaches within a short distance of the heart of New England, Troy and Albany. Northward its navigable waters are within twenty miles of the St. Lawrence—to the eastward, westward, and south as far as the Mohawk, and the Sound, lies a country of indifferent agricultural resources, but rich in manufacturing, commercial and mineral wealth, in water power and wool-growing facilities. In this region there is more consumption of our staple—wheat—more population, manufactures, commerce and wealth, than in any territory of equal extent in America. In that market Canada has no nearer rival than Western New York—a State which produces about as much wheat as she consumes, and whose consumption, in all probability, will keep pace with her production of this article. Upper Canada, on the contrary, produces twice as much as she consumes, and so will Lower Canada, if her farmers recover the confidence destroyed by the fly. More than one million of barrels of imported flour were retained for consumption in Boston, for the year ending August, 1849:—the greatest amount from one place being 323,318 barrels, from *New Orleans*. Besides this a large amount was left by the Western railroad between Albany and Boston;—there are also the imports at the other New England ports, so that New England takes more flour from the Western farmer, in the average of years, than Old England does. The population we would have for customers would be about three millions; by allowing a barrel of flour for the consumption of each individual, and deducting one million of barrels for their own production, (New England does not produce half a million), and for the substitution of *corn*,—we have here, a near “home”

market for two millions of barrels of flour, or nine millions bushels of wheat. Canada, with good harvests, could supply half of this amount, and with a canal to Lake Champlain, would receive the *tolls* (and the reduced transportation) for the greater part of it. But the great advantage of this market to us, and of our position respecting it, arises from its *proximity* and the *rapidity and capacity* of our communication with it, whereby we could pour in our supplies before any other party. We look upon this canal as a matter of greater importance to us than any measure which can be adopted, either for the interests of our agriculture or our treasury, and trust no effort will be spared to bring it into speedy operation. It lies in Canadian territory, and should be a Canadian work under uniform control with the St. Lawrence and Welland Canals,—the indispensable continuation of which works it has now become. The navigation of Lake Champlain, although lying wholly in American territory, is secured to us by treaty.

Only two years since our exports to the United States, by Lake Champlain, were unworthy of notice. The Champlain Canal was an annual charge upon the revenues. The construction of the St. Lawrence Canals has given rise to importations from Western States into Vermont,—and the St. Lawrence route has been proved to be sixpence per bushel cheaper for wheat, and a saving of at least a week in time. A communication between the St. Lawrence and Lake Champlain, upon the same scale with our canals, is only needed to make the former the favourite route of the American trade. We dare not rest content with the present commerce of the Welland Canal: in two or three years the enlarged Erie Canal will be opened from Albany to

Buffalo—and Oswego can then no longer maintain her position unless her canal be enlarged. That our present communication with Lake Champlain is wholly unsuited to our wants, will be seen by inspecting the freighting business done upon the St. Lawrence and Champlain Railroad, a portage of fifteen miles with transshipment at both ends.

The following is a list of the principal articles which have been exported to the United States, in 1849, by the routes of the Chambly Canal and the St. John's railroad :

By Railroad from Laprairie.		By Canal.
Ashes, ... barrels....	9,427	
Beef, do	1,342	
Eggs, do	2,050	
Flour, do	*52,815	11,500
Linseed, do	4,021	
Do ...bushels...	4,653	
Indian corn do	12,802	13,012
Oats, do	29,289	
Peas, do	11,175	137,019
Do ...barrels....	6,348	
Wheat,...bushels...	32,400	88,691
Lumber	5,376,905 feet,	14,385,600
Square timber, ...		1,179,140 feet.
Salt, ...bushels... ..		60,829

As the State of New York, from obvious motives, will be in no hurry to enlarge the Oswego Canal, and thereby reduce her canal revenues—so it may at first be supposed that she would not enlarge the sixty-six miles of canal between Lake Champlain and tide water on the Hudson. But as certainly as we see above that five-sixths of the flour export to Lake Champlain, in 1849, went by the speedier route of the railroad, (although there was a canal route, larger than the enlarged Erie, which might have been employed,)—so

* This is an increase of 500 per cent upon 1848.

when we have once broken our way into Lake Champlain, with our 500 ton vessels, will the railroads from Burlington carry down Western produce from Cleveland or Chicago, which will reach *Boston* cheaper, and six days sooner than it would if sent by the Erie Canal; the point of transshipment will simply be transferred from Buffalo to Burlington. Thus the *City of New York* would be compelled to enlarge the Northern Canal, and we would then have Boston, New York, and New England regular contributors to the trade of St. Lawrence.

One of the most important advantages to be anticipated from the connection of the St. Lawrence, with Boston, through Lake Champlain and the Burlington Railroads, is—the influence which the capital and connections of that enterprising city will exert over the Western trade, in favour of the Canadian route. The importance of the railroad portion of this route will be seen on reflecting that the number of barrels of flour carried over the Western Railroad in 1849, exceeded by 200,000 the total export from Canada by sea in the same year.

We have thus endeavoured to illustrate the bearing of our canals upon the agricultural interests of Canada, by shewing, first: that they enable us to take advantage of any foreign demand *upon our own account*, and thus evade the tax, which, since our protection has ceased in the British markets, must be constantly levied upon us if we had no egress but by New York, or if the unimproved state of the St. Lawrence had continued to make the American duty less burdensome than the cost of transport by Quebec.

And secondly: that by giving us a connection with Lake Champlain, they not only permit us to pour Canada breadstuffs into the heart of the best market in America,

before supplies can come from any other quarter, but also so reduce the cost of transport into this market that,—with the duty exacted,—our farmers will receive a higher price for their wheat, than they, without a foreign demand, could otherwise obtain—while as the proprietors of the St. Lawrence canals, they may exact from the necessities of the Americans—not only the cost of their public works but the expense of their civil government.

GENERAL TRADE OF THE ST. LAWRENCE.

We now propose to take a more general view of the influence of our canals upon the agriculture of Canada, by considering the future trade of the Valley of the St. Lawrence. The superiority of the St. Lawrence route, as a means of communication *between tide water and the West*, is too generally admitted to require extended notice in this place. But in consequence of the greater expense of communication, which has hitherto existed, between the seaports of the St. Lawrence and countries beyond the gulf, unfavorable and desponding conclusions with respect to the efficiency of this route *as a whole*, have been indulged in,—from our natural propensity to look back and falter, and from the too recent removal of the swaddling bands of the old colonial system.

The effect of the removal of the restrictions upon our sea commerce, by the late Imperial Navigation Act, has already been experienced. Norwegian vessels sailed from Quebec in October, laden with timber destined for the English market, but which was taken to Cherbourg in France, there to await the commencement of the new order of things in January. It is needless to enlarge upon this head, for if we have seen flour taken from New York to Liverpool, in

October last, for six-pence sterling per barrel, it will hardly be denied that an offer, of at most one shilling more, would have brought round any required number of foreign vessels to Quebec—a step which can now be taken, but which our laws then forbade. A change in the price of freights, and an “assortment” of flags, will this year be exhibited at Quebec, for which few are prepared. We could not have a more favourable time for the *début* of the St. Lawrence. The great demand for shipping which arose out of the famine of 1847, gave such an impulse to ship-building in the American ports, that in 1847 and 1848, more than half a million of tons were added to the commercial marine of the United States. It was the competition amongst these vessels which reduced freights to six pence in October last, —while at Quebec they were four shillings, and protected from competition and reduction, by the scarcity of vessels, and the abundance of freights in the Timber Coves.

The Rapids of the St. Lawrence, between Prescott and Lachine, are susceptible of improvement—at a comparatively trifling cost,—so as to permit the descent by the river, of vessels drawing nine feet water. This important feature in the St. Lawrence cannot be over estimated. The great river compensates us for the shortness of the business season, by giving a navigation not only capacious, but so rapid as to enable us to exhaust the surplus of the “great West” in the few months of the business season which are left to us after harvest. A provident and kind Hand has so apportioned the tumbling waters, and curbed their licentious speed, that the maximum of effect is secured with the minimum expenditure of time and power. A continuous navigable rapid from Prescott to Montreal would not, on the whole, be as beneficial as the present

distribution of the river into rapids and lakes, because in that case we would require a continuous canal in ascending from Montreal.

When, in 1811, it was proposed to bring the Erie Canal around the Falls of Niagara, and by Oswego, in order to embrace the trade of Lake Ontario *en route* to New York, that sagacious and enlightened statesman, Dewitt Clinton, rejected the proposition in these memorable words: "It is sufficient to say that articles for exportation when once afloat on Lake Ontario, will, generally speaking, go to Montreal, unless our British neighbours are blind to their own interests: a charge which ought not lightly to be made against a commercial nation."

The average freight in *steam vessels*, from Toronto to Quebec, in 1849, was 1s. 6d. per barrel: now a barrel of flour could not be sent from Toronto to New York for less than 2s. 6d.; we have, therefore, one shilling in price in favour of Quebec—we do not ask any more. The time required to reach Quebec, say four days; to New York, fourteen days:—to New York, two transshipments; to Quebec, none. We need not enlarge upon the importance of speed *to our farmers*, in the three months which intervene between the harvest and the close of the navigation, —or *to our buyers*, whose prices are regulated by weekly advices from Europe, and who, with the assistance of the telegraph, the rapids and steamers of the St. Lawrence, will be enabled to fulfil an order before a réaction in the markets takes place. If then, as must be admitted, the *inland* portion of the St. Lawrence be incomparably the superior line of communication between the country around the Western Lakes and tide water, the question is, whether this superiority is sufficient to counterbalance the known

disadvantages of the *sea route*, and the preëminence which greater wealth, more extensive connections, and larger markets give to New York.

Before we can profitably consider the future prospects of the ocean commerce of the St. Lawrence, it will be well to examine some of the alleged evils of the gulf route—and first, that favourite one of the panic makers, viz: that the St. Lawrence is frozen up “for six months in the year.”

If we take the average of the arrivals of the first ships at Quebec for the last twenty years, we will find the date to have been the 30th of April or 1st of May. So quickly does the ice disappear, that it not unfrequently happens, that the first ship from sea and the first steamer from Montreal, arrive at Quebec upon the same day. For the last twenty years, the average of the first arrival at Quebec from Montreal is the 25th of April. The average date of the opening of the Erie Canal for the same period is the 21st of April, but for the last three years it has been the first of May, although during these same years ships have arrived from Britain at Quebec on the 24th of April, and steamers from Montreal on the 17th of that month. The great length of the Erie Canal, the time required to fill it with water, and the preparation necessary after the frost and snow have disappeared, make it difficult to open it for navigation in any season before the first of May. This difficulty will not be diminished by the enlargement of that canal, or increase of business, and we may safely assume the first of May as the future date of the opening of navigation upon the Erie Canal, and practically, the same date for the Hudson River. In point of time, then, the commencement of navigation is equalized at both

points; but inasmuch as the Erie Canal is not open at *Buffalo*, until the first of May, a cargo of flour will not reach Albany until ten or twelve days later, while one which leaves Lake Erie by the St. Lawrence will, upon the average of years, arrive at Quebec on the first of May, and find ships there ready to take it to England, or can be sent on in the same craft to Halifax. We have nothing to fear, then, from competition by the Erie Canal in this respect. New Orleans and the Mississippi have an advantage over us in the winter months, but as the food districts are in the north, upon the tributaries of the Ohio and Mississippi, which are closed in winter, there also our positions are nearly equal. The Erie Canal has been closed, on the average of twenty years past, before the fifth of December, on and after which date vessels may every year leave Quebec, the only objections to sailing late arising from cold weather and snow storms, causing difficulty in managing the rigging,—an evil to which all vessels are subject upon a European voyage at this season of the year:—and one which, in the St. Lawrence, could be in a great measure neutralized by a harbour of refuge. Many captains consider that the snow storms are more frequent in October and November than in December, in which latter month the weather is more settled. We cannot see, then, that the St. Lawrence need have one day less of navigation than the Erie Canal. It is true that very few ships have remained in this river after the first of November, but this did not arise from any fear of imprisonment, but out of the exclusive system which has hitherto confined this navigation to a certain number of traders, which, as they only make two trips in the year, arrive chiefly in May and September, and are under no

necessity of remaining later than November. But, if there be freights, we will hereafter have plenty of arrivals from sea in November, and departures in December.

GULF NAVIGATION.

The difficulties and dangers of the gulf navigation have been greatly overrated:—a nobler navigation, in ordinary weather cannot be desired. The gulf has three openings to the Atlantic,—the Northern one by the Straits of Bellisle, ten miles wide, which if lighted would form the shortest and safest route for the Fall trade with Europe, because the heavy fogs which overhang the Southern routes are seldom encountered in the Northern channel. The middle passage, fifty miles wide, divides Newfoundland and Cape Breton, and the third outlet, which is called the Gut of Canso, affords to us a short and sheltered communication with Halifax. From the Atlantic to the pilot ground at Bic, (153 miles below Quebec), the channel is nowhere less than twenty-five miles wide, and generally from fifty to seventy miles, and without anchorage. Between the anchorage at the pilot ground and the Atlantic, some “half-way house” or stopping place,—where a vessel which had left the anchorage could put in for refuge if overtaken by an easterly gale before she had cleared the Gulf—is much wanted. Easterly winds bring fog, or “thick weather,” and there being no sheltered anchorage or harbour of refuge, a vessel near Anticosti must take her chance of running back—several hundred miles—through the fog, to where she started from, against a current drawing on the south shore,—or beat about until she is, perhaps, brought up upon Cape Rosier.

The gulf stream, running from Florida parallel with the Atlantic coast, with a velocity of several miles per hour, and widening in its course, touches the banks of Newfoundland, and sweeps off to the Eastward :—following the direction thus given, the waters of the St. Lawrence pour out of the centre channel between Newfoundland and Cape Breton, and a Northern current is drawn into the gulf through the Straits of Belleisle, bringing field ice, seal, and icebergs in the spring. Notwithstanding the tide, there is a current always *down* in the gulf, below Father Point. The deflection given by Anticosti to the river stream, and the Northern current coming in through Belleisle, cause a “set” upon Eastern Gaspé, at Cape Rosier. Here therefore, the “going ashore” takes place ; but as the causes are constant, and the effect ascertainable, the currents of the gulf present no impediment to good seamanship. Fogs have been so dense that the bowsprit could not be seen from the stern of a ship, and so lasting, that a vessel has sailed from the Atlantic to Cape Des Monts,—five hundred miles—by the “dead reckoning”—allowing for the currents,—without being able to take an observation. Had the apparent course been followed,—as too many captains have done without allowing for the current,—the vessel would inevitably have been ashore ; but *the width of the channel* enables an intelligent captain to keep on his course *through fog or darkness*. Fogs are therefore no more insuperable obstacles than dark nights, in which the sailor does not slack his course ; and collisions can be avoided by care as well in the one as the other ;—unless indeed it be true, (as stated by some Captains in explaining their log,) that fogs effect the compass ! These fogs are caused by the meeting of two currents of air of different temperatures, and infest the mouth of

the Mississippi, as well as the St. Lawrence. The last danger to be encountered in the St. Lawrence, is from floating fields of ice in the spring and summer months, which can be avoided in many instances by the simple precaution of keeping out of it. The disasters from this cause are confined almost wholly to the Montreal traders who, in the struggle to get the first cargo in, leave Britain about the 20th of March, and are hovering off and on, striving to evade the ice, and gain a few days of the spring markets in Montreal. The greatest number of disasters (which reached between forty and fifty in one year out of about 1,500 arrivals or 3,000 voyages in and out) occurred from this cause; but of late years they have almost disappeared, not having reached five in nearly the same number of voyages. That the navigation is not unavoidably hazardous must be acknowledged upon inspecting the class of vessels engaged in the coasting trade between Quebec, the Lower ports, and the gulf Provinces; for more crazy looking craft are hardly to be found on any waters. They escape however, *because they know the route*, and their tonnage being light, they can take shelter in many of the bays where there is not water enough for sea-going vessels. Another cause of disasters—which has now happily ceased,—is to be found in the character of the vessels which have been engaged in the timber trade. Formerly it was supposed that almost anything was good enough to carry timber in, as the cargo could not sink. So upon the Welland Canal, a few years since, it was thought that any horse was good enough for towing; the old, the poor, the halt, and the blind were therefore procured for this purpose, and as they were killed by the work in a few weeks, it was soon found to be true economy to pay £30 and £40

each for the best which could be procured, and the class of animals now employed for this purpose are not to be surpassed anywhere. These crazy old timber craft were unfit to carry out merchandize to Quebec (for they could not be insured) and thus this traffic has been confined to the racing Montreal traders, at high freights, calculated to cover contingencies of a collision with the ice. A poor ship would, of course, have a poor captain and poorer crew; thus no precaution was omitted for sealing her fate: but this system is fast vanishing, and many of the vessels at present engaged in the trade, are as fine ships and as well manned as any in the British marine, and are employed in the cotton and South American trade during the winter months.

The higher rates of insurance, from Quebec than from New York, have assisted in giving an exaggerated colour to the dangers of the gulf navigation. It has been asserted that the only local insurance company which existed was ruined by the *Gulf route*, but the real cause of the failure is to be attributed to its meddling in West India risks, and it was by the evils of the *Mississippi outlet*,—the Gulf of Mexico instead of the Gulf of St. Lawrence, that they were overcome. Since the failure of that company, insurances applied for in England were done at very high rates for late shipments, but the competition of New York companies has checked this extortion; the latter companies are nearer, and know the nature of the season. The rates of insurance for the summer months are nearly the same as at New York,—from one and a quarter to one and a half per cent,—and range from three to six per cent on Fall shipments. In short, if it were not that the St. Lawrence is the only approach to Canada from sea,

we would not notice the disasters in the Gulf. They have scarcely exceeded one quarter per cent of the arrivals of the last few years. The number of wrecks of United States vessels alone, in one year, ending in 1848, was 585 ; lives lost 477 ; property \$4,523,176. The largest number lost *at one place* was twenty, on the *Florida reef** :—so much for the Mississippi versus the St. Lawrence route. In 1848, 501 sailing vessels, and thirteen steamers, belonging to Great Britain, were wrecked—the tonnage of which was 96,920. The Gulf of St. Lawrence, we believe to be *naturally* a much less dangerous route than either the British or Irish channels, and if half as well lighted and furnished, would, with only occasional exceptions, be a safe, speedy and well supported navigation. The disadvantages are such as human ingenuity and perseverance can cope with and alleviate :—A harbour of refuge near Matane, and a light and fog whistle upon Cape Rosier, are the most important requirements. More steamers, lights, buoys, harbours and relief stations, will soon add the Gulf route to the many examples of successful commercial intelligence, and perseverance.—Lastly, we will notice the too general and hastily formed conclusion, upon the *circuitous* length of the St. Lawrence sea route, and its apparent inferiority to New York in this respect.

Most persons accustomed to the view of maps and charts upon Mercator's projection, or upon the plane surface of the Atlas, are apt to complain of the great *détour* the St. Lawrence makes to reach the Ocean, and imagine

* The wrecks "off the coast of Florida" for the last five years have averaged thirty-six annually.—In 1848 they were forty-one, and in 1849, forty-eight.

that there is a great additional length of voyage to be made, by a ship starting from Quebec or Montreal for Britain, over one from New York. *Quebec is some hundreds of miles nearer to Liverpool by navigable routes than New York.* To persons accustomed to these charts, and who have been taught to believe that a straight line is the shortest distance between two points, it would appear that the nearest route to the British channel—say from Lake Erie—would be in a *direct* line, and therefore would leave at Buffalo and pass South of Halifax. They would also suppose that New York was particularly favoured in having a *straight* course, over the open Ocean, to the British channel; whilst Montreal could not “strike a straight line” to that point without running on Gaspé and Newfoundland. Inasmuch as a *straight* line between Quebec and Liverpool would pass some hundreds of miles beneath the surface of the Atlantic (as it would be the chord of an arc upon the earth’s surface) it is clear that, although the *shortest* line, it is not the most convenient way of getting there. If a thread be stretched upon a globe, from any point in the British channel to Toledo on Lake Erie, and arranged so as to lie upon the shortest line it will be found to run nearly throughout America, within the waters of the St. Lawrence, not deviating at any point more than 30 miles, and if the eastern end of the thread be shifted to Glasgow or the North of England its shortest position will be found in the Straits of Belleisle, between Newfoundland and the Labrador coast. If this thread be now placed with one end at New York, and the other at Liverpool, in its shortest possible position, it will be found resting upon the Island of Newfoundland; although upon the *flat* charts this Island appears as much out of the way as Greenland.

Kingston is as near to Liverpool and Hamilton as near Glasgow, as New York is to either by a sailing route. The false idea given to persons by Mercator's projection, arises from the circumstance, that the meridian lines are drawn parallel to each other; thus a degree of longitude at the North Pole, where it is nothing, is drawn as great as at the Equator, where it is seventy miles: again, on those charts the parallels of latitude, at all latitudes, appear to be the shortest routes between two points in the same latitude, thus the semi-circumference of the arctic circle seems a less distance than the spherical diameter of the same.

The coast of British America is more than 1,000 miles nearer to Britain, than New York, because every degree of longitude contains a less number of miles as we approach the poles. Canada has suffered not a little, in the estimation of the world, from the conception of Mercator. When we stretch a thread from the great food-producing region of America, at Lake Erie, to the great food-consuming country of Europe—Britain, and find that the St. Lawrence runs almost upon the line of a great circle, the shortest possible distance, with the most capacious, speedy, and economical mode of communication, we cannot fail to be struck with this remarkably direct channel between the parent and the offspring of the most favored race of men.

Most seamen's charts being upon Mercator's projections, and all charts being plane surfaces, very few navigators take the shortest route by which they could sail. Such is the preconception established by those charts, that they cannot understand why they should sail above 50° North latitude, in going and returning between ports in Europe and America, both of which are under 50° :—the really shortest line appears a curve on the plane surface of a map, and

all the problems in sailing must be worked out by spherical trigonometry. The northern route, between New York and Liverpool, is the preferable one on account of its affording a smoother passage. The most stormy part of the Atlantic is found where the easterly gales meet the Gulf Stream, south of Sable island, *on the course between New York and Liverpool*; there it was the "Great Western" was nearly lost—there the "President" was last heard of. "The current of the gulf-stream running with great violence against the force of an equinoctial gale, produces a heavy broken sea, which strains and impedes a vessel in its progress; and it has often happened, that on comparison of the logs of two vessels sailing at the same time, (from New York) that which has taken a northern route, passing near the Nova Scotia coast, has gone smoothly on her way,—while the other, after a tumultuous struggle with the elements, has come out strained and damaged, and obliged to put into some transient port to refit, before proceeding on her voyage." The gulf stream is turned eastward at the Banks of New Foundland, and flows toward the Mediterranean; the St. Lawrence route therefore is not injuriously affected by it. The Cunard steamers take the northern route we have spoken of, and hence the secret of their quick passages.

The following are approximate sailing distances to different points, from the three rivals in the western trade, Quebec, New York, and New Orleans:—although not strictly correct, they will be found *comparatively* so.

To Liverpool from N. Orleans,	5300 miles.
" " New York,	3475 "
" " Quebec,	3300 " by St. Paul.
" " " "	3000 " by Straits of Belleisle and the North of Ireland.

Quebec is nearer to any port in Europe, Africa, or the Indian Ocean, than New York or New Orleans.

To the			
Mediterranean from N. Orleans,	5230	miles.	
“ “ New York,	3690	“	
“ “ Quebec.	3550	“ by Cape Ray and St. Paul.	
“ “ “	3475	“ by Straits of Belleisle.	

Quebec is about 500 miles farther from Cape Horn, and 200 miles nearer the Cape of Good Hope than New York, and 350 nearer to the latter Cape, than New Orleans. A vessel sailing from the Equator (in the Atlantic) will get into the Gulf of St. Lawrence in the same sailing distance as by running to New York.

LUMBER TRADE.

The timber coves of Quebec, under the free admission of foreign vessels, give resources to the St. Lawrence, which neither New York nor New Orleans is, or can be possessed of. The stock of lumber in Quebec in 1846 would have freighted shipping to the extent of 1,000,000 tons, and its value could not have been less than £1,500,000. The tonnage which arrived at Montreal and Quebec in that year was 628,425 tons, employing about 25,000 men; and was greater than that which arrived at New York in 1840, although the commerce of the latter city was open to all the world. Our exports of lumber by sea, for the last five years, have averaged about half a million of tons annually. This ability to furnish freights to returning vessels must exercise a powerful influence upon immigration and imports by the St. Lawrence. We now pay as much extra freight upon every foot of timber we export to Britain as our protection on this article in her ports amounts to. The passenger trade, the most profitable of freights, will

find the Saint Lawrence the cheapest and most convenient route for reaching the general destination of emigrants,—the West; and under the new Navigation Act, the returning vessels of whatever country, will carry our timber to Britain,—at greatly reduced freights. This staple will be therefore cheapened in that country, and its consumption increased, and we can see no reason why our market for it should be confined to Britain. Of the immense quantities annually exported from the Ottawa and Eastern Canada, that portion only of the sawed lumber shipped from Bytown—by Lachine and Chambly direct to the Hudson river—passes through any of the St. Lawrence canals. In 1848, about forty millions of sawed lumber were sent from the Canada shores of lakes Erie and Ontario to the Hudson river by way of Oswego and Buffalo; this quantity, in 1849, was more than doubled, and with a ship canal from the St. Lawrence to lake Champlain, the whole would take that route so long as Upper Canada exported in that direction. But the growing market in the West, where from the immigration, absence of stone, and habits of the people, vast quantities of lumber are required, must ere long give another direction to the movement of this indispensable article. The West is dependent upon Michigan and the adjacent shores of Canada for this useful and necessary product;—both of which districts, from their own rapid progress and consumption, as well as from the stimulus given by the extent and excellence of their markets, cannot long continue to meet the demands upon them. Then the cheap transport of returning brigs will bring up the products of the Eastern forests through our capacious canals, and the pine of the Ottawa, the Saguenay, and perhaps of the St.

John, will be exchanged for the products of Illinois and Wisconsin. In 1843, Chicago imported seven millions; in 1844, nineteen millions; in 1847, thirty-two millions; and in 1848, sixty millions of feet board measure of lumber, twenty millions of shingles, and ten millions feet lath. In 1840, the value of the lumber *produced* in Michigan was less than £100,000; in 1848, her *exports* of this article were valued at twice this amount:—her exports in 1847, were seventy-four millions of sawed lumber, twenty-seven millions of shingles, and \$125,000 worth of lath, timber, staves, &c. Cleveland imports about three millions of Canada lumber; Buffalo, in 1847, imported twenty-five millions, and in 1848 twenty-eight millions; Oswego, in 1845, eighteen millions; in 1848, twenty-one millions of sawed lumber, chiefly from Canada. In 1849, the amount of lumber imported at Oswego was fifty-one millions (forty-four millions from Canada,) and at Buffalo and Black Rock, forty-three millions, of which twenty-three millions were from Canada. These heavy exports from Canada West and Michigan,—the great demand for the Hudson river market,—requiring three hundred millions annually,—and the astonishing increase of imports at Chicago (which seem to mark this city at no very distant day a rival to the Hudson river in the demand for lumber,) must ere long place this article amongst the list of up-cargoes upon the St. Lawrence. The importance of the lumber trade in giving tonnage to our canals, may be inferred from the fact, that in 1848, the products of the forest formed forty-four per cent of the total movement of tons on the Erie Canal; and they are about six-sevenths of that upon the St. Lawrence.

Emigration—as we have already hinted—may be reasonably looked to as an important source of future wealth

to the trade of the St. Lawrence, and its canals. The annual immigration into America is now above 300,000. In the ten years ending with 1849, above 1,000,000 landed at New York, and in the last four years about 200,000 arrived at Quebec.

The arrivals in 1848 were at Quebec	28,261
1849	38,494

An increase of thirty-five per cent; and it is well known that the late arrivals were of a superior class :—both these circumstances, the superior quality and increased number, we may fairly ascribe to our canals.

TRADE WITH THE GULF PROVINCES.

These provinces, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Newfoundland, are engaged in lumbering, fishing, and navigation, and are all importers of food. Our trade with them is now increasing, but still limited. It will be best appreciated by the following statement of the departures for these provinces from Quebec, for the last five years :

1845	73 vessels.....	4056 tons.
1846.....	121 do.	6558 do.
1847.....	137 do.	7881 do.
1848.....	138 do.	7658 do.
1849.....	153 do.	8728 do.

Previous to 1842, much of the supplies for these markets went from the St. Lawrence, but the act of that year imposing a duty upon American produce shipped from Canada, threw the supply into the hands of the Americans from Boston and New York. Our navigation restrictions and limited shipping led to high freights, and the return cargo we received being limited by the Canadian demand, there was not trade enough to enable us to compete with the Americans, whose empty vessels going to Nova Scotia for

plaster and coal, could take out provisions at nominal rates. If we can take the coal and plaster *up* the St. Lawrence, and find a market for it, we can bring the flour down to greater advantage than it could be brought from any other quarter. The population of Halifax is 25,000, and the value of its exports and imports £2,500,000; which is greater than those of Montreal with twice its population; this arises from its favourable position for commercial pursuits, it being an *entrepôt* for carrying on the trade with the West Indies. As the United States send about 300,000 barrels of flour direct to the British West Indies and Guiana, and nearly as much more to Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, most of which comes from the borders of the lakes, there is no reason why (*if they must do it*) they should not be allowed to take it from Cleveland direct to Halifax, and exchange it there for the West India produce and fish for the Lake markets, *paying us tolls each way*. The population of these provinces is about half a million:—New Brunswick has coal, iron, fish, plaster, grindstones, and timber, which latter article she turns into money in England, and purchases her provisions chiefly with the cash. In 1846 New Brunswick paid the United States £216,000 stg., for provisions, and only sold them £11,000 worth of coals and fish. Nova Scotia has grindstones, iron ore, and coal of the finest quality, most abundant and easy of access, but it is unfortunately at present in the hands of a monopoly, who have the exclusive right of mining, so that although large beds of valuable coal are unopened in Chignecto Bay, the steamers plying over them burn English coal. For this reason, and on account of the number of vessels arriving in ballast, Liverpool coal has been furnished cheaper at Quebec and Montreal, than that of Nova Scotia. This position

of affairs cannot continue long. The Nova Scotians send both coal and plaster to New York and pay the duty, and it is probable, when a demand is opened for it by the St. Lawrence, they can supply lakes Ontario and Champlain with a better and cheaper article than can be obtained from lake Erie, because the *up* freights will be cheaper than those *down*. Already cargoes of this coal have been laid down in Montreal at 16s. 3d. per ton, which price will be reduced on an increased demand. English coal, also, in 1849, was by means of the St. Lawrence canals laid down at Kingston at \$5 per ton, and could soon drive the American article off lake Ontario.

An immense volume of water, driven by the trade winds from the coast of Africa, has for ages dashed against the iron-bound coast of Nova Scotia, producing the "Bore" or a perpendicular tide of sixty or seventy feet up the bay of Fundy, and, surging up into every inlet and stream, has scooped out harbours, in number and extent unrivalled in the world. Between Halifax and Cape Canseau, are twelve harbours, capable of receiving ships of the line, and fourteen others of sufficient depth for merchantmen. The shipping of these provinces exceeds 100,000 tons, and will be of invaluable service to the St. Lawrence route, in the infancy of the Canadian sea-going marine. The extension of the trade of Nova Scotia,—the development of her abundant resources, which must follow her connexion with the interior of America, can scarcely be overrated.

NEWFOUNDLAND.

But all the developed resources of the Gulf sink into insignificance, when we contemplate that inexhaustible mine of the deep—the fisheries of Newfoundland. A dreary

and inhospitable island, the terror of the shipwrecked mariner—apparently uninhabited and barren—and enveloped in almost perpetual fog, divides the Gulf of St. Lawrence from the wide Atlantic. Its cold and desolate shores have been battered and jagged into the most fantastic lines, by the surrounding sea, beneath whose waters is stretched that extraordinary bank, six hundred miles in length and two hundred in breadth. “The ocean flowing over this vast submarine mountain contains, perhaps, as much of human food as could be afforded by an equal extent of land territory. The same productive character distinguishes the shores of Newfoundland and Labrador. It is remarkable, that while the whale fishery, which ranks next in importance, can be pursued with success in any one place only for a limited time—*here*, the nations of Europe and America have, for several centuries, laboured indefatigably with nets, lines, and every process that can be contrived or imagined, and yet not the slightest diminution of fruitfulness has ever been observed.”

From the arctic shores large fields of ice are annually floated down in the neighborhood of this island; on their surface are conveyed herds of seals, which are taken by the adventurous seamen for their skins and oil.

The French have 25,000 men and 500 large vessels; the Americans, 37,000 men and two thousand schooners, from thirty to one hundred and twenty tons; the British have 25,000 men, five hundred and twenty sealing vessels, from one hundred to one hundred and eighty tons, and ten thousand and eighty-two open boats.

The Americans take 1,500,000 cwts. of fish, and the French and British 1,000,000 cwts. each; in all, three and a half millions of cwts. or 175,000 tons of fish annually;

which, at £12 10s. cy. per ton, amounts to £2,187,500 currency, or eight and three quarter millions of dollars; the seal fishery and oil are probably about £125,000 more. The Canadian fishery at Gaspé is important, the value of the exports for 1848 being £91,252 15s. 8d.; but our more active neighbours take the fish from the sleepy Canadian, by surrounding the "schools" before the latter turns out from his hammock. The lower coasts of the St. Lawrence, at Gaspé and the Bay of Chaleurs, are alive with fish,—they are used as manure, the land is plastered, the air rendered noisome, while the waters appear from the shores black with the "riches of the deep."

With respect to the West Indies, inasmuch as their productions must be extensively consumed upon the borders of the St. Lawrence and its lakes, and seeing that their provisions come chiefly from the West, we believe that the route which supplies the one will bring back the other.—The St. Lawrence and Welland Canals offer an unbroken communication between Chicago and the Caribbean sea; an advantage not possessed by the Hudson River or Mississippi routes, and therefore we think we are borne out in counting upon a large portion of this trade for the St. Lawrence.

TRADE WITH THE UNITED KINGDOM.

The altered position of our relations with the mother country, consequent upon the recent sweeping changes in her commercial policy, has produced an extensive revolution in our political and commercial feelings toward our transatlantic brethren in Britain; feelings which would never have reached their present intensity but for the inverted order of commercial progression. Had the older

and stronger party first removed the restrictions upon the younger one, a gradual relaxation of the mutual ties (consequent upon a just appreciation of relative positions) would have taken place, without actual shock or injury. We have received great favours which should be heartily acknowledged, and for the good intended we hope that we are grateful; if we have suffered from the vacillating legislation of those by whom our destiny has hitherto been controlled—we have alluded to it rather as an apology for our position, than as a ground of complaint against her we have loved—perhaps with more fervour than wisdom. To mourn over by-gone days of colonial pupillage,—to sigh for the “flesh-pots” of protection,—to commit political suicide by rearing parties *here* to attack or defend *English* policy;—to propose taxation on millions in Britain, in order to benefit thousands in Canada,—or to retard and impoverish ourselves for the purpose of making the rich richer, would be to play the part of “sturdy beggars,”—of simpletons, or of political coxcombs.

Old England requires for her own consumption, upon the average of years, somewhere about 10,000,000 bushels of wheat more than she produces, or 2,000,000 barrels of flour, and therefore, as a market, ranks upon a par with New England. The average annual entries of foreign wheat for consumption in the United Kingdom, for the sixteen years ending with 1845, were little under nine and a half millions of bushels. Inasmuch as the average number of acres in wheat crop were, in 1846, about 4,600,000—the average produce 142,200,000 bushels, or over thirty bushels to the acre—an improvement in the harvest to the extent of two bushels per acre will destroy the demand, and a deficiency to that extent will double it. Now, as there is

an available surplus at the neighbouring ports in Europe, in the Baltic and the Black Sea, of about 18,000,000 of bushels only, the value of which laid on board at the shipping port is about one dollar per bushel—the quality about equal to the best Canadian, Ohio or Genesee wheat, and the freights about the same as from America—whenever there is a demand, for home consumption, for say 20,000,000 bushels, as was the case in each of the five years from 1838 to 1843, large shipments from America will take place; but whenever there are good harvests, as in the six years from 1831 to 1837, in which the deficiency only ranged from 230,000 to 1,000,000 bushels, the trade is not worth notice. It must be remarked, however, that in a country like Britain, where capital is abundant, consumption great, speculation rife, the harvest so uncertain and the stake so great that a cloudy day transfers thousands from one broker to another, the importation cannot be closely assimilated to the actual wants of the country.—Wheat is only profitably shipped to England, when the quality grown there is inferior—when good, or drier wheat is required for mixing; it is a dangerous cargo, being very apt to “heat,” and comparatively little therefore is shipped from America. Our facilities for grinding, the value of the offal here, and the cheaper, safer and more convenient cargo of flour, give us a decided advantage in the English market when there is a sudden demand for consumption. The continental growers are too much impoverished by the gambling character (under the old corn laws,) of the market upon which they were wholly dependent, to become at once manufacturers of flour; and, despite the doubtful advantages of serf labour, cheap ships, and prison-fed sailors, the unequalled character of our inland communications,

and the rapidly increasing intercourse between Britain and America, with the advantages abovenamed, will, we believe, give the latter the command of the English market, in *flour*, whenever she finds it profitable to send there. Thus, although in 1843 Great Britain imported flour and wheat in the relative proportions of one barrel of the former to *thirty* bushels of the latter—in 1847 (when the famine demand was great,) the proportion of imports was one barrel of flour to *six* bushels of wheat. Of the 3,600,000 barrels of *flour* imported into the United Kingdom in 1847, the United States sent 2,487,086 and Canada about 500,000; no doubt the greater part of the remainder came indirectly from America, through Halifax, St. John and other ports; but of the 21,000,000 bushels of *wheat* which England imported in the same year, only about 3,000,000 were sent from America. Although the imports of *wheat*, in 1848, varied but little from those of the previous year, *flour* fell off to 1,000,000 barrels, and the United States sent only about the one-twentieth part of the flour and one-tenth of the wheat, which they exported to Britain in 1847, viz: about 180,000 barrels flour and 250,000 bushels of wheat. In the year ending 1st September, 1849, this export rose again to about 1,000,000 barrels and 1,000,000 bushels. Of the flour imported into the United Kingdom in the year ending August, 1849, the United States sent eleven-sixteenths and Canada nearly the whole of the remainder. In 1845, England was supplied with flour almost wholly from the St. Lawrence. Thus the United States sent to Great Britain in the years ending September

1845.....	35,355 bbls. flour,	2,010 bus. wheat.
1847.....	3,150,689	4,015,134
1848.....	183,533	251,622
1849.. ...	1,118,116	1,091,385

Take the three leading articles of United States bread-stuffs, and we find the export as follows :

Flour, bbls.	Wheat, bus.	Corn, bus.	Corn meal, bbls.
1846...2,289,476	1,613,795	1,828,063	298,790
1847...4,382,496	4,399,951	16,326,050	948,060
1848...2,119,393	2,034,704	5,817,634	582,339

There is much difficulty in comparing British receipts with American shipments, on account of the different periods, January and July, at which the annual statements are made up. Nearly four millions of bushels of Indian corn and 300,000 barrels of corn meal are exported from the United States to the West Indies and other foreign markets. The United States export of Indian corn to Great Britain commenced in 1844; its progress and the proportion it forms of the total imports into the United Kingdom being as follows:—

Total Imports into the United Kingdom. Sent by United States.

	Corn, bus.	Meal, cwt.	Corn, bus.	Meal, bbls.
1844...	296,512	105	89,073	29
1845...	443,024		135,688	1
1846...	5,694,888	131,910	1,192,680	50,165
1847...	28,866,496	1,448,837	15,526,525	713,083
1848...	12,694,168	234,114	4,581,367	105,350 bushels
1849...	18,298,264	not known.	12,729,626	86,058 do.

The falling off in the importation of corn into Great Britain in 1848, no doubt arose from the immense quantities imported in 1847, and the position it has assumed in 1849—while there is a relapse in flour and wheat even below the imports of the year previous to the famine—prove the great effect which the introduction of corn will have upon the consumption of wheat in England.

That the United States could export 6,000,000 bushels wheat and its equivalent in flour in 1845, 13,000,000 in 1846, 26,000,000 in 1847; and then fall back to 13,000,000

in 1848, and to 6,000,000 in 1849, with their production of wheat constantly increasing throughout this period, shews a wonderful elasticity, and extensive home market. If the price of wheat is higher in proportion than for corn, the Americans export the former and consume the latter; if the demand for corn be also great, they kill their hogs and export corn, for the pork will keep. If there be no great demand for either, they eat their surplus wheat, feed their hogs with the corn, and export pork as having the greatest value in the least bulk. This will be seen on comparing the export of these two articles, in two years of heavy and light demand respectively.

Receipts of corn and pork, at New Orleans, in 1847 and 1848:

	Shelled corn in sacks.	Corn in ear.	Meal bbls.	Pork lbs.
1847.....	2,386,510	619,756	88,159	8,450,700
1848.....	1,083,465	509,583	47,543	13,564,430

The United States produce about 120 millions of bushels of wheat, and nearly 600 millions of bushels of corn. Their surplus of wheat for export, may be taken at twenty millions bushels, and of corn, an almost unlimited quantity. They export about one and a quarter millions of barrels of flour and about one million of bushels of wheat, to other markets besides those of Great Britain or her North American colonies, viz. to Europe, Asia, Africa, the West Indies and South America, and to the isles of the Ocean; and inasmuch as manufactured flour is the article required for these latter markets, we believe that the principal export of this article from New York, New Orleans and the St. Lawrence, will often be to other markets than Britain; and we have brought forward these tables to shew that American flour is not compelled to seek a market in England, but remains here

until a demand is made ; and that there are markets open to Canadian enterprise if we but *seek* them.

We incline therefore to the opinion that Britain will not *regularly* require a greatly increased supply of flour from America ; that her millers will prefer supplying themselves with wheat from the continent ; that the use of Indian corn will render unnecessary a largely increased supply of wheat, and that England will grow almost her own supply of this article ; that large and increasing quantities of Indian corn, in bulk, will be sent thither from America, and that the shipment will take place chiefly by the St. Lawrence and Mississippi, instead of New York, as there will be only one transshipment, and lower freights ; both important considerations to a bulky and cheap article. In a commercial point of view, we believe the Indian corn trade to Britain will be more important to our canals than that of all other American bread-stuffs and provisions to that country.

The effects of a famine are not confined to the year in which it occurs, but a reduced production follows from the loss of confidence in the earth, and the loss of means by the sufferers to till it. We can therefore place no confidence in the continuance of the present demand in England for bread-stuffs ; which, though it has fallen off heavily, has yet exceeded the average of the period preceding this famine ; undoubtedly the repeal of the corn laws will increase the consumption, but it must also increase the production—or woe to England !

Whether the uncertain climate of that Island will be able to compete with the agriculture of more favoured countries, or with lighter taxed lands and labour, is a problem yet to be solved, and one of interest to us for a time to come. It

is scarcely possible that with capital and labour abundant and cheap, agriculture should recede in a kingdom where it has lately made such extraordinary advances. There are millions of arable acres yet uncultivated—Ireland, if half tilled, would render England independent of the world. There has, in England, been a struggle of interests, in which the selfishness of the landlord has brought a just retribution upon his head,—and incidental emancipation to the commerce of the colonies. Protectionists might have secured five or six s. per qr., which would have given steadiness to the market, contentment for a few years longer to the Canadians, and would have been chiefly paid by the producer; but they played for all, and lost all. If rents are lowered, *taxes must follow*, and what else will follow it is not in human ken to foresee. If England is fortunate,—if Ireland is regenerated, and Scotland does not become another Manchester, Britain will not be long dependent upon strangers for food: she cannot long continue so—for melancholy indeed will be the fate of that country, in which the culture of the soil, the first destiny of man, becomes a subordinate employment. From the census of 1841, it appears that one and a half millions were engaged in agriculture and above three millions in trade: allowing for those mechanics and traders employed wholly by agriculturists, there seems a large majority against the tillers of the soil: millions who do not, and cannot, literally, produce their own food, and whose further wants, if any, must for years be supplied from abroad; for we look upon it, that the plethora of food which has poured into England since the famine, and produced the present low prices, will also bring an agricultural panic; and that thus the natural diminution of production which follows a loss of confidence

in the earth, will be increased by loss of confidence in the markets. But prices should not long be as low as they now are, because foreign supplies, which have been stimulated by the prospect of continued scarcity, will slacken ; but in the meantime the tenant-farmer in England may be ruined, and years will be required to replace him upon a better system. The ordinary yield of grain in the United Kingdom, after deductions for seed, is about 400,000,000 bushels, and as nearly 100,000,000 bushels of grain and meal were imported in 1847, there must have been a general deficiency of nearly twenty-five per cent. Before the famine, the imports seldom reached twenty millions of bushels of grain and meals of all kinds. In 1848, the imports were about sixty millions, and in 1849, eighty-nine millions, with good wheat harvests ;—showing the great shock received, and the slowness of recovery. Notwithstanding therefore the largely increased demand in Britain, at present, we should not neglect setting our house in order for a change, and take time by the forelock in order to establish more numerous and certain markets for our produce.

We have gone thus largely into the consideration of the British corn market, in order to show how unsafe and reprehensible it would be for us to place our dependence upon that market which as colonists we have hitherto considered ample for all our wants. We believe the repeal of the high protection of the Corn Laws to be a public benefit ; to it we owe that of the Navigation Laws. We never felt sure of the continuance of protection,—and as confidence is the basis of trade, it is better the St. Lawrence should be fairly tested, without any artificial advantages, and its exact value ascertained, rather

than have continued in a system which gave rise to gambling, commercial intoxication, and the inevitable reaction.

If we cultivate Indian corn, we may become the nearest corn exporting part of America, and find a steady market in Britain—where the dampness of the climate is unfavourable to its growth. Provisions and products of the dairy would follow as a matter of course, and for our great staple—flour,—we should make an effort in the markets supplied by our American neighbours, or wherever our ships may wish to cruise in the winter months. In the New England market we can generally get a remunerating price, unless the duties be increased; our position and cheap transportation reducing the drawback of the tariff. The state of the Rio de la Plata should teach us that, however numerous the would-be masters of a river, it should have but one commerce. We now pursue a churlish policy:—having fortuitous possession of the lower half of the valley of a river which is the outlet of a great part of North America, we refuse to allow the produce of lands, watered by the same cloud, to descend to a common market, and by thus doing have so impoverished this lower half and kept it so naked of shipping, that the exports from our own upper portion have leaped the barriers, and seek their way through the numerous and better supplied channels, which our more active neighbours have, in self defence, carried down to the sea-board. Without either shipping or freight sufficient to support our canals, or mark out the channels in our mighty river, we pursue the “dog in the manger” policy of monopolizing what we cannot use. This policy has built up New York and the Erie Canal, and prevented Quebec from being the

first ship building port in the world. Large exports and imports alone can produce low freights, and by restricting the highway for a world to the trade of a province, we have forced the flour supplies of Pictou through New York, and the coal supplies of Quebec through Liverpool. The great St. Lawrence, as the outlet of one Province, has been left behind by the smaller Hudson—the outlet for many States. We must give the transit of the St. Lawrence free to all who inhabit its shores; for, as colonists, our imports from Britain are too insignificant to cheapen the freight hence; whereas the trade of the Valley of the St. Lawrence—without national distinction—with Britain, with the Gulf Provinces, the Indies and the world, will be the trade of an empire, and second to none on this continent.

That trade we now propose to notice:

FUTURE TRADE OF THE ST. LAWRENCE.

The valley of the St. Lawrence differs from those of Rivers generally, in being almost *unilateral*. It is the *natural* outlet for Canada—that part of Vermont, west of the Green Mountains—Northern and Western New York—Northern Ohio—Michigan, and a portion of Illinois and Wisconsin. In the more Southern portion of the valley, at Lakes Michigan and Superior, the waters which flow into the Gulf of Mexico approach within a few miles of the Great Lakes themselves; so that of the States of Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and Wisconsin, which touch the navigable waters of the St. Lawrence,—an important portion of Ohio only forms a part of the valley of this river. But,—with the exception of Vermont, the Eastern portion of Northern New York,

and a part of Pennsylvania,—there are no chains of mountains, or broad tracts which divide the countries drained by the St. Lawrence from those drained by the Mississippi, Hudson, and Connecticut Rivers. There are not, therefore, those decided geographical distinctions,—mountainous boundaries,—which in many countries govern the trade of particular districts; and the great plain of the West between the Ohio, the Mississippi and the lakes, is easily accessible from both the Gulfs of St. Lawrence and Mexico, and also from tide water on the Hudson. The want of extensive branches penetrating rich tracts of land, as is the case East and West of the Mississippi, is in a great measure compensated, for by the magnificent expansion of the St. Lawrence into the navigable lakes Superior, Huron, Michigan, St. Clair, Erie, and Ontario,—by Lake Champlain, and by those noble tributaries,—the Ottawa and the Saguenay. The lakes present a coast of upwards of 5000 miles, and the valley of the St. Lawrence proper, possesses a population of at least 4,000,000. The products of this great plain, in descending to tide water at the three points, will be governed by the respective demand at those places, the time, expense and character of the routes. Taking Chicago as a central point in the plain, *the distances* from thence to New Orleans, New York and Montreal, do not vary very much; but *the time of transport*, and the character of the routes, are widely marked. From the returns of transport upon the Erie Canal, we find that the States of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan and Wisconsin, with a portion of Northwest Pennsylvania, made most of their imports and exports by lakes Erie and Ontario. In addition to these, Kentucky, Missouri, Tennessee, and Iowa make importations by the Northern route, probably on account of the

expense of ascending the Mississippi. By the Northern route they *export* all manner of agricultural produce, cotton, tobacco, domestic spirits, leather and lead, and *import* furniture, dry goods, crockery and hardware, fish, sugars, tea, and all kinds of groceries. The population, whose commerce is centered upon the St. Lawrence, cannot now be less than five millions of souls, whose increase in numbers, in agricultural and commercial wealth, is unprecedented in the history of the world. We fear to estimate their future progress, for natural incredulity will here reject calculations for the future,—though founded on the past,—as certainly, as that the follies of youth will be repeated in every generation, notwithstanding the accumulated experience of centuries; because the proportion of those who walk by faith, to those with whom “seeing is believing,” is as small in the commercial, as in the moral world.

THE WEST.

In the ten years between 1830 and 1840, the population of Ohio increased fifty per cent; Indiana, one hundred per cent; Illinois, three hundred per cent; Michigan, seven hundred per cent; Wisconsin was not known in 1830, in 1840, her population was 30,945, and at the next census, (in 1850) it will shew not less than one thousand per cent. ratio of increase. While this has been the progress of whole States, that of their commercial towns is not less remarkable. Buffalo, Cleveland and Detroit, have doubled their population between 1840 and 1848; Chicago trebled hers; and Milwaukie rose from two thousand to fifteen thousand in eight years. Cincinnati (on the average of fifty years) has doubled her population every seven years:—in 1800 it was seven hundred and fifty; in 1835, 24,000; 1842,

48,000; 1849, 96,000. The average growth of these cities, in the last eight years, with St. Louis, Louisville, Pittsburgh, Oswego, Rochester, Columbus, and Dayton, has—taken together—exceeded *one hundred and fifteen per cent*, while the Atlantic cities, New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Boston, New Orleans, Charleston, Savannah, Mobile, Brooklyn and Portland have—taken together—increased only *thirty-eight per cent*, in the same period of time. In 1841, the whole American commerce of the Lakes—the value of the export and import, exclusive of the passenger, trade,—was \$65,825,982, and in 1846, it was valued at \$123,487,621; the ratio of increase being about eighteen per cent per annum. In 1847, the value of the imports and exports of Chicago was under 5,000,000 of dollars; in 1848, it was over 19,000,000 of dollars; the enrolled and licensed tonnage in 1847, 3,951; in 1848, 10,488.

THE MISSISSIPPI ROUTE.

The Mississippi, with its branches, has a total length of forty-seven thousand miles; sixteen thousand six hundred of which are steamboat navigation. It drains 1,300,000 square miles, or 785,200,000 acres; which valley, if peopled as densely as England, would contain 500,000,000 of souls; it now contains a population of 10,000,000, increasing at the rate we have just described. In 1817, the first steamboat was built; in 1834 there were two hundred and thirty; in 1842, four hundred and fifty; in 1843, one hundred and twenty-six were built, and 1846 one hundred and eight more were built. “There are now five hundred and seventy-two, having a tonnage of 118,655 tons, valued at \$5,189,179; yearly outlay \$19,915,753, and annual earnings \$17,428,840; the largest number of all the boats now run-

ning *lose money* ; and the entire capital is exhausted every four years. Above one hundred of these steamboats are destroyed, and as many are built every year."

The Mississippi river, a deep and narrow stream flowing with a uniform current of about three miles per hour, is a dangerous navigation on account of its "snags" and "sawyers"—trees and logs which—borne down by the annual freshets from many thousand miles of forest *ground*—and are rapidly embedded in the alluvion, one end riding in the current. Steamers coming up keep near the shore to avoid the current, and thus run upon these "snags" and go down ; these obstructions are constantly changing their positions, and cannot be guarded against by any previous knowledge of the navigation. The annual losses exceed 1,000,000 of dollars, and insurances range from twelve to eighteen per cent. We should not, therefore, complain of five per cent in November on the St. Lawrence.

The Ohio river ranges sixty-three feet between its highest and lowest water marks, and its navigation is of course materially affected by the level of water. The depth in the bed of the stream,—which is at times reduced to two feet at Pittsburg,—and the extent to which its tributaries are at different times navigable, produce a fluctuation and uncertainty both in shipments and in the price of freight. Freights are therefore affected by the depth of water in the river, as well as by the supply of boats at hand. Transport to the New Orleans market is most economically made in "flat-boats," usually built at the wharf—and steam saw-mills are engaged in sawing lumber for this purpose ; as these boats cost but little, have a light draught, take but few men and are built where the produce is collected—a rise of water covers the river with flat boats, and

the rapid current conveys them speedily and cheaply to New Orleans. There the boats are sold, and the men return on steamers which are the only craft which ascend the Mississippi and Ohio. Freights are thus very cheap *downwards*, and flour from Cincinnati may be taken for about 2s. 6d. per barrel to New Orleans, a distance of fifteen hundred miles. But the increased number and expense of these flat boats, as the timber disappears and produce multiplies, must have a tendency to raise the price of transportation instead of diminishing it; and as it is not probable that empty barges can be cheaply towed from fifteen hundred to two thousand miles against a constant current, transportation will be carried on chiefly in steam vessels, the number of which must be greatly increased, their success more doubtful than it now is, and their capacity limited by the engine, fuel, and depth of water, which is lowest generally during the season of lake navigation. At this time, therefore, much of the produce of the Ohio valley is sent northward by the lakes. There are other objections to the New Orleans route, for western shipments to Europe, founded upon the climate, charges, and fluctuating commerce of that port. Tobacco, flour, pork, bacon, lard, butter, cheese, &c., are injured by passing through a warm climate, and the charges for drayage, fire insurance and commission, are exorbitant, because men will not work in a climate like New Orleans for Northern rates of profit.—Freights from New Orleans are very uncertain, but may generally be stated at fifty per cent higher than at Atlantic ports. For these reasons, respectable Atlantic buyers have given their preference to the Northern or inland route, at ordinary rates, rather than receive the articles we have mentioned, at New Orleans free of all transportation to

that point. Hurricanes in the Gulf of Mexico, the Florida reefs and currents, with the islands and shoals of the West Indies, and the fogs on the lower part of the river, render the Mississippi and its outlet at least as objectionable as the St. Lawrence; while the bar at the mouth of the river, giving only twelve feet water, makes New Orleans as a shipping port, far inferior to Quebec.

From Columbus in Ohio, Indianapolis, and Peoria, Illinois (about halfway between Lake Michigan and the Ohio river,)—central points in the West, equally accessible to the St. Lawrence and Mississippi routes,—we think it may be safely asserted that Western produce can be taken to Europe by the St. Lawrence, cheaper, quicker, and in better order than by New Orleans. The great demand of 1847, for provisions and bread-stuffs, has given an impulse to the Mississippi exports by New Orleans, and a comparative position, which we cannot consider permanent—although great increase of business at that port must of course be looked for, with the progress of the valley of the “Father of Waters.” Of the exports of corn,—which article is almost wholly the produce of the valley of the Mississippi,—5,000,000 bushels came to the Hudson river through the Erie canal in 1849; and of the exports to Great Britain, since the 1st of September last, 363,377 bushels are from New York, and only 84,084 from New Orleans. The exports of flour from New Orleans under the light demand of 1848, were only one-third those of 1847; while the arrivals at the Hudson only fell off thirty per cent; there being a difference in the decrease of three hundred, as compared with thirty per cent. The receipts of bread-stuffs at the Hudson, by the New York canals, are generally three or four times greater than those

by the Mississippi, at New Orleans. The value of the flour which arrived at the Hudson in 1848, was \$17,500,000; at New Orleans, \$3,500,000; of wheat, Hudson, \$3,500,000; New Orleans, \$250,000; corn, \$1,800,000 to \$1,750,000; butter, \$3,333,000 to \$250,000; wool, \$2,500,000, to none at New Orleans. The great monied value of the commerce of New Orleans is owing chiefly to her sugar, molasses, cotton and tobacco; she cannot compare with the North in export of food. The large amount of produce which has taken both routes proves the necessity for both, and the preference obtained for the articles in the Northern route proves the necessity for another and more capacious Northern route than the Erie Canal—to the crowded state of which, for the last few years, the increased export of the Mississippi is in a great measure to be ascribed. But the most decisive indication of the relative value of the two routes is to be found in the Report of the Ohio State Board of Agriculture for 1849, in which the prices of agricultural products in the different counties of the State are given, viz: in the northern or Lake counties, the central counties, and the southern counties bordering on the Ohio river. The average is as follows:

	Wheat.	Corn.
Northern Counties <i>on the St. Lawrence</i> ,	94 cents.	33 cents.
Central Counties.....	79 do.	26 do.
Southern or <i>Mississippi Counties</i>	70½ do.	24 do.

Shewing a difference of 1s. 2d. per bushel on wheat and 5½d. per bushel for corn, or about twenty-five per cent in favour of the Northern markets. Now it matters not whether this difference be the result of the Eastern markets at the North being better than the European ones, because, if the Northern route can transport to New York or Boston cheaper than the Mississippi can, it can transport to Europe

cheaper. Any part of Ohio is nearer in miles to Quebec than to New Orleans.

Taking the produce of the Western States and Canada, which entered the New York canals by Buffalo, Black Rock and Oswego, and arrived at tide water, we find that this Western export of surplus for Eastern and Foreign markets doubles in every four years. Assuming it to be 800,000 tons for the Northern route in 1849, including the St. Lawrence, —which is below the mark,—in 1861 we may look for 6,000,000 tons of this produce seeking a market eastward; and there are as good reasons to believe that it will find that market as there were in 1836, to suppose that the 50,000 tons which then found a market, could in 1846 be extended to 500,000, and meet a ready sale. The progress has been as follows:

1836.....	54,219	At this rate, it would be in
1840.....	121,671	1852.....1,300,000
1844.....	308,025	1856.....2,600,000
1848.....	650,154	1860.....5,200,000

Of this tonnage three-fourths are the products of agriculture.

But it is vain to attempt a future for the West—"The Great West"—a term as hackneyed as "Anglo-Saxon" and equally as undefinable. It is impossible to estimate the effect of that emigration, or rather transplantation of population and capital, which is flying from anarchy or misrule in Europe, and which is adding one-third of a million to the population of America annually. When Mr. Ruggles, in 1838, ventured to express the opinion *that if the Erie canal were enlarged*, at the then rate of tolls the receipts—which in 1838 were about 1,500,000 dollars—would at the close of navigation in 1849 reach 3,000,000 dollars,—the most unbounded abuse and merriment followed

this declaration. The "Glorification Report," as it was called, was scouted, and its alleged absurdities were successfully urged in obtaining a change in the political control of the canals. Yet, in 1846, without the enlargement and with reduced rates, the tolls exceeded 3,500,000 dollars;—and while the arrival of tonnage at tide water from the State of New York—which is now about half of the total arrival—has increased since 1837, not quite fifty per cent, that from the Western States has increased one thousand per cent. Instead of looking forward to any diminution in the proportional increase of Western imports—the fact that but a limited portion of the soil is cultivated—that there is room for thousands where there are now hundreds, and that each successive year increases not only the number of exporters but their ability to export—we ought, strictly speaking, to count upon a largely increased *rate* of progressive exportation, as the result of the increased facilities offered by the St. Lawrence improvements and the enlarged Erie Canal. The Mississippi route is one that does not admit of improvement; on the contrary, with the increased expense of flat-boats and more general resort to steam, the cost of transport may rise instead of fall; while the certainty of a cheaper import into the Ohio and Northern Mississippi districts, will reduce its ability to compete with the lake communications—and perhaps turn part of their export Northward. The navigation of the Northern routes might, if necessary, be enlarged and rendered perfectly slack water for ascending craft, but the Mississippi will be able to take no different class of boat a hundred years hence, than can now be used; and the power of steam must be constantly employed, throughout all time, in order to ascend her strong current.

If then there is every probability that in a few years,—in less than ten,—additional millions of tons of human food and human necessities will be poured out from the “garden of America,” how can we despair of the St. Lawrence? And, as year after year the mighty tide rolls on, what route possessed of ordinary facilities can lie idle? By what route are all these millions of tons to find their way to the seaboard,—the natural seat of foreign commerce, of mountain waterfalls and manufactures? They will block up the enlarged and reënlarged excavations,—they will ground upon the shallow tributaries of the Ohio—they will blockade the narrow outlet of the Mississippi at New Orleans, and then they *must* overflow; then the annual increase will fill the Pennsylvania and Virginia ditches, and groan over the the New York and Erie, the Baltimore and Ohio, the Pennsylvania, Ogdensburgh, and Portland railways.*

Upon what do the railroads which look out upon the St. Lawrence at Longueuil, Ogdensburgh, Oswego, Buffalo, and Dunkirk, found their estimates of future support? Is it not for this gigantic trade, looming in the Western distance, that so many millions have been expended in the canals and railroads which cross the Alleghanies? Would the Ogdensburgh railroad ever have been undertaken but for the Welland Canal? And if these roads are to be supported by a tonnage which must first float upon the waters of the St. Lawrence, can it be possible that the “main body” of Western exports will leave the broad bosom of

* In the Tolls, Trade and Tonnage Report of the New York Canals, published April 1850, the Auditor says :—

“..... The business of the West outgrows the rapidity of change in the avenues of the trade..... its unlimited productive capacity seems destined to flood our canals with its abundant commerce, *through every channel of communication with the Lakes.*”

our river to climb over the table lands of New York, or to be confined within the narrow limits of 4 feet 8½ inches of iron rail? Then, the first great feature of comparison, will be *capacity*.—Granting for the moment that Quebec may not compete with New York,—Burlington and Whitehall must successfully do so with Albany and Oswego.—And can any one believe—if Lake Champlain becomes, as it must become, a principal medium of communication between Eastern and Central North America,—that a respectable portion of the great trade thus directed, will not *exude* through the Gulf of St. Lawrence. Even the lesser portion will suffice, but it is scarcely to be supposed that the greater one will, after brushing as it were the borders of tide water, pass downwards and clamber over the Green Mountains to reach the seaboard.

When we consider that the consumption of wheat in the United States is now over 100,000,000 bushels, and that the Eastern States are larger *regular* customers than any foreign country, it may not be premature to imagine the effect of a partial failure of the wheat crop in this part of the world. If the scarcity of 1829 or 1837 should again make flour worth ten dollars per barrel in New York, there must be a corresponding rise in the markets supplied from that city, and Canada, through the St. Lawrence, may avail herself of this rise. It is not an improbable supposition for the wheat crop in Canada, as in 1848, to be good, while that of the United States is, in the same year, a partial failure; but in the event of a *general* failure, how stands the commercial position of the St. Lawrence? The price at New York would then, as now, govern that in the interior along the St. Lawrence—and as this would be a price for home consumption, it would be higher inland

than at the sea-ports. Importation for the American markets at Lakes Champlain, Ontario and Erie, would then take place from the Baltic or Britain,—as in 1835—by *the nearest route*, through the St. Lawrence, which under those circumstances could alone furnish a return freight to foreign vessels, by means of her timber.

We should not judge of the future from the deficiencies of the past;—the St. Lawrence has been hitherto singularly unfortunate, for the American export had no sooner become important, after the Peace of 1815, than it was destroyed by the Act of 1822, and was only brought back in time to be rendered nugatory by the commencement of the seven years' scarcity of wheat in that country. When in 1840 and 1841—after our political troubles were over—it again commenced to descend the St. Lawrence, it was strangled by the Gladstone Act of 1842. Its revival under the golden prospects of the Wheat Act of 1843, was short lived, and the subsequent warnings from Britain effectually prevented our reaping any permanent results therefrom, before the repeal of the Corn Laws.

THE ERIE CANAL.

Believing as we do that the future commerce of interior America will require all the avenues which approach from the seaboard, and more than all,—for every additional facility is an additional stimulant,—we would not in any narrow spirit of rivalry enter into a consideration of the respective merits of the principal competing routes for this commerce.

The Erie Canal is the most formidable competitor with the St. Lawrence for the trade of the West. The number of tons which arrived at tide water by this Canal, and the

proportion thereof which came from the Western States, are as follows:

	Total tons.	From Western States.	From New York State.
1844	799,816	308,025	491,791
1845	959,550	304,551	655,039
1846	1,107,270	506,830	600,440
1847	1,431,252	812,840	618,412
1848	1,184,337	650,154	534,183

This statement is confined to the Erie Canal alone, and shews that the internal trade of the State furnished the greater part of the down tonnage, until the year 1847. The decrease in the exports from the State has been ascribed to the gradual disappearance of lumber, which forms a large percentage of the State tonnage. We will therefore compare the products of agriculture alone:

	Total tons.	From Western States.	From New York State.
1844	371,326	236,155	135,171
1845	430,454	206,422	224,032
1846	612,585	410,111	202,474
1847	875,365	683,138	192,227
1848	674,194	489,478	184,716

We will now look at the movement upward from tide water—distinguishing shipments for the West:

	Total leaving tide water by Erie Canal alone.	For Western States.	Left in New York State.
1844	120,972	42,415	78,557
1845	127,501	49,618	77,883
1846	143,912	58,330	85,582
1847	191,670	75,883	115,787
1848	209,768	84,872	124,896

These tables shew a decrease in the exports of the State, and an increase in her imports, which indicates an increased consumption of bread-stuffs by the commercial and manufacturing towns in the Western part of the State, and the rapid formation of a home market. The capacity

of the old Erie Canal was almost exhausted in 1847. For the whole of one month the lockages, at one of the locks, averaged one in less than six minutes, working night and day, or 7492 in thirty-one days. The enlarged locks will probably be brought into operation in 1851, but several years must elapse before a sufficient depth of water can be obtained. The boats on that canal are loaded to three and a half feet draught of water, and with the enlarged locks will be able to carry about one-third of the cargo which can be accommodated by the locks upon the Welland Canal. The transport of emigrants and passengers, upon the freight boats of this canal, has been a source of profit through which they have been enabled to carry cargoes at lower rates than otherwise. This resource will soon be cut off; railways can carry in one-tenth the time, and may receive, in addition to the canal prices, the cost of a week or ten days *board*.* The enlarged Erie Canal, although it will cheapen the *cost*, will increase instead of diminishing the *time* of transport; and it is very questionable, (supposing that the enlargement prolongs for several years the capacity of the canal to do the Western business,) whether a check may not be received from a more serious quarter, viz. from a deficiency of water to supply the enlarged locks. Not only does improvement of a new country increase the evaporation, but the winter accumulations are thrown more rapidly off by cleared lands,—producing the double evil of a rapid exhaustion of the former

* This opinion is confirmed by the Report of the Auditor of the Canal Department of New York, published in April 1850, who says :—"The toll on passengers and packet-boats is rapidly diminishing under the competition of railways, which, with their more frequent trains, increased speed, and reduced fare, are drawing this important source of commerce away from the canals."

reservoirs, and more violent freshets to threaten the works. But without speculating upon other causes, there is little reason to doubt that the increase of local business throughout the length of that canal, superadded to a Western trade increasing at the rate of about twenty per cent per annum,—if it does not very shortly overstock it, will tend to keep up freights and force exports and imports through the St. Lawrence. If it be beyond dispute—as the present year will demonstrate—that flour can reach Boston, at least as *cheaply* by Lake Champlain, and ten days *sooner* than by the Erie Canal, there can be no question about the route it will take.

A comparison of probable future rates of freight to Quebec, Burlington or Whitehall, by the St. Lawrence,—and to New York by the Erie Canal, is unimportant when the probable difference of cost upon the two routes is considered in connection with the extent of business open to them. We have seen the cost of a barrel of flour from Buffalo to Albany, rise in 1847 to two dollars :—when there is a brisk demand all routes will be dear ; and *then* the quickest and most capacious one must tell. Unless our Government had taken the prudent step of furnishing tug-boats upon the St. Lawrence, our forwarders would have preferred a monopoly of the Canadian trade until it had disappeared through Oswego. And if now the American lake marine be not permitted to pass down from Lake Erie to Burlington, prices will be kept up by the limited shipping of the St. Lawrence, so as to continue the direction of Western trade through Buffalo and Oswego.

Freight must therefore be governed by the amount of traffic and the supply of the means of transport ; but in order to shew *the capacity* of the St. Lawrence, we submit

an estimate of *possible rates* as a basis of comparison with the Erie Canal or any other route. We assume the most extreme cases,—all tolls to be abolished on both routes, and full freights to be obtained each way. The Erie Canal, when enlarged, will pass boats carrying 1500 barrels of flour. We will not go into a calculation of expenses, but will take the estimate of John B. Jervis, the engineer of the Croton Aqueduct, and Hudson River railway, who says, that after the enlargement a barrel of flour can be carried from Buffalo to New York exclusive of tolls for fifteen cents (ninepence currency.) No one has made a lower estimate. The average cost for the last nineteen years has been thirty-eight cents, or one shilling and elevenpence, to Albany for freight alone, and from six to ten cents more to New York. Starting from Cleveland we will allow five cents as the freight to Buffalo, and we have the bare cost of carriage, excluding tolls, insurance, commission, transshipment, &c., at twenty cents from Cleveland to New York, by the enlarged Erie Canal, or one shilling currency.

A brig, built to fill the Welland Canal locks, will carry 4000 barrels of flour, cost £3500, and should pay for herself in four years. Her *net* earnings per annum, therefore, should be £875, and as her annual expenses will be £750, her gross earnings should be £1625 per annum. The navigation opens on the Welland Canal not later than the 15th April, and will not close on the St. Lawrence before 20th November; she has therefore seven months at least of a navigable season, in which time she will make seven trips between Cleveland and Quebec, Burlington or Whitehall. For up freights we will allow her 350 tons of coal, salt, or equivalent of measurement goods; she will therefore transport in the season 28,000 barrels

flour *down*, which at ten cents,* (or sixpence currency) would give £ 700
 and 2450 tons goods *up*, which at two dollars (ten shillings currency) would give 1225
 £1925

Gross earnings required 1625

The surplus is ample to cover all extras including *towage*.

This we submit as a fair relative position of the respective powers of the two communications. We believe that flour and merchandize will be transported, in less than two years, between Lake Erie and Quebec at a cost, including all charges, which will be little more than the *tolls* now charged upon those articles between Buffalo and Albany. The Erie Canal *toll* upon flour is thirty-one cents, which is greater than the average total cost from Toronto to Quebec in 1849 ; and the *toll* upon merchandize is twenty-nine shillings per net ton from Albany to Buffalo, and upon iron fourteen shillings and sixpence per net ton. Railroad iron was taken from Quebec to Cleveland, in 1849, for twenty-two shillings and sixpence per ton—covering all charges.

The influence of the St. Lawrence upon up freights is already felt on the Erie Canal. The following table shews the arrival of light and “heavy goods” for the West, at Buffalo by the Erie Canal, for a series of years :

	Lbs. “Light.”	Lbs. “Heavy.”
1843	55,727,218	32,568,818
1844	59,349,890	34,328,816
1845	63,920,758	36,972,670
1846	73,625,207	42,522,828
1847	92,788,433	59,602,867
1848	101,330,222	64,346,841
1849 ..	108,125,789	56,580,919

* Flour has been carried from Chicago to Buffalo for ten cents per barrel:—twenty-five cents (one shilling and threepence currency) is a paying rate—distance, over 1000 miles.

It will be seen that there has been a constant and important increase until 1849, when "heavy goods" fell off below the standard of 1847. This is explained by examining the St. Lawrence up freights for 1849 :

Up Freights via St. Lawrence Canals, 1848 and 1849.

	Tons in 1848.	Tons in 1849.
Railroad and pig iron	1,870	11,439
Earthenware	473	1,047
Liquors	537	945
Sugar and molasses	627	990
Castings, bar and wrought iron	4,225	5,565
Furniture and baggage	620	918
Salt and coal	4,863	6,141
Merchandize	9,864	12,851
Oil	375	427
Brick, stone, cement, sand and lime...	76	415
Total tons	23,530	40,738
Passengers	16,040	20,814
Vessels	2,890	2,763

Tolls collected upon the Welland, Lachine and Chambly Canals in

	1848.	1849.
Welland.....	£29,064	£34,573
Lachine	11,661	15,740
Chambly.....	436	1,644

Rate of increase on the Welland, nineteen, on the St. Lawrence, thirty-four, and on the Chambly 375 per cent.

On view of the foregoing we see no reason to believe that the trade of Canada will leave the St. Lawrence for the American routes.

During the year 1849, we have exported to and through the United States, amongst others the following articles :

Lumber, 96,000 millions of feet, B.M. value, ...	£240,000
Flour, 260,000 barrels	260,000
Wheat, 800,000 bushels.....	160,000
Oats, peas, beans.....	25,000
Other Agricultural produce.....	50,000
Ashes	90,000
Timber, staves, saw logs, railroad sleepers, shingles, &c.	75,000

It is probable that the greater portion of the Canadian flour and wheat, which was bonded at Oswego, was taken out of the custom house at New York, by payment of the duty; as we find £75,000 have been collected upon our exports at that place. The total value of our exports to American ports, for 1849, will probably exceed £1,000,000. The United States collections of duties on Lake Champlain were, in

1848,.....	\$14,826 93
1849,.....	48,663 70

—a rate of increase which indicates that our exports to the United States will seek that route.

We have paid to the United States about £125,000 in duties upon our exports, and to the State of New York £30,000 in canal tolls and a larger sum to her forwarders.

If we had been in possession of a ship canal, connecting the St. Lawrence with Lake Champlain, undoubtedly the greater portion or nearly all of those of our exports which went to Oswego,—valued at \$2,214,447,—would have passed down through the St. Lawrence canals, to Burlington or Whitehall.

The American market being better than the English we sold largely to the United States, but have supplied ourselves chiefly by the St. Lawrence; a state of things certainly not to be regretted, especially when we are convinced that the temporary loss of tolls upon our canals below Prescott can be remedied, through Lake Champlain, without any change of markets.

But supposing the United States markets to continue better than those of Britain, we have a market now supplied by the former which will not only take our surplus export but give tolls to our canals. The United States

exported to the Gulf Provinces, in the year ending June, 1849, the following bread stuffs:

Wheat	305,383 bushels, value \$	332,765	.
Flour	294,891 barrels, “	1,518,922	
Corn meal ...	153,971 “ “	434,109	
Indian corn...	221,442 bushels, “	126,793	
			\$2,412,589
And other articles valued at			1,199,194
Total value of exports			\$3,611,783

That we are regaining this market, is shewn by the exports from Montreal to the Gulf Provinces, in

1848	£27,474
1849	44,361

The value of the imports at Montreal in 1849, exceeds that of 1848 by £138,000,—and the exports by £80,000. The value of the export trade of New York for 1849, is \$5,672,000 less than in 1848.

Although less flour and wheat descended the St. Lawrence canals in 1849, than in 1848—on account of the export to Oswego—the amount exported from Montreal exceeded the quantity of 1848,—probably from an improvement in the agriculture of Lower Canada.

That the decline in the trade of the St. Lawrence, in 1848, did not proceed from any general abandonment of the river for the inland ports and for the overland trade by New York, may be seen by comparing the duties received at sea and inland ports, in 1847 and 1848:

	Montreal and Quebec.	Inland Ports.
1847	£242,117	£172,516
1848	203,825	130,204
1849	256,739	183,597

The falling off at the inland ports, in 1848, was greater in proportion than at Montreal and Quebec. The collections at inland ports for 1849, shew a greater proportional increase, as the natural result of our heavy exports in that

direction ; but we think the comparative statement of up freights we have given through the St. Lawrence canals, should banish all fears of our becoming tributaries to the Erie Canal for our imports. If this was our position with the restrictions of the Navigation Laws in full force, we can have no fears for the future.

In 1825, the cost of bringing a barrel of salt from Lachine to Kingston was eighteen shillings and ninepence currency. It is now brought from Montreal to Toronto for one shilling and threepence. In 1825, a barrel of American salt in Western Canada cost fifteen shillings ;—the value of the same quantity in Montreal, at that time, was six shillings and three-pence ; Upper Canada then paid about £2,000, per annum, of a salt duty to the Erie Canal fund :—thus, while we had a better article at less than half price in Montreal—from the unimproved state of the river navigation we were contributing towards the construction and maintenance of the most formidable competitor with our own route. In 1840, the cost of a ton of merchandize from Montreal to Kingston was three pounds two shillings and sixpence :—in 1849, railroad iron was taken from Quebec to Cleveland for one pound two shillings and sixpence. It is but a few years since the cost of taking a barrel of flour from Kingston to Montreal was two shillings :—in 1849, it was taken from Toronto to Quebec for one shilling and sixpence. Indeed, such has been the effect produced by our canals upon freights, that as a general rule it may be assumed, that in the transport of tons, dollars now supply the place of pounds of former years, and that flour and salt in barrel are carried downward and upward at a rate per mile cheaper than a “single” letter through the post office.

CONCLUSION.

WE have, in the foregoing pages, endeavoured to illustrate the bearing of our Canals upon our Agriculture,—without assuming, as their influence, the whole of the reduction of prices and increase of population and wealth in recent years ; because we feel that while so large a proportion of our exports and imports have been made through the New York Canals, we would not be justified in ascribing too many ameliorations to a navigation which we appear to have partially deserted. All the great enterprises of the western world are prospective, and in this light we have viewed the St. Lawrence ; and our desire has been to vindicate the policy which has projected, and so far accomplished the commercial connection of the Atlantic with the future seat of empire on this continent,—the Upper Basin of the St. Lawrence ; and to shew that,—however insignificant the present results of this policy may appear—neither our politics nor our finances are likely to permit the completion of our canals before the overflowing of that inevitable Western Trade, will, in spite of prejudice, opposition or national associations, have called into requisition the incomparable powers of the River St. Lawrence. While that darkness which precedes the dawn of a day of commercial brightness, is apparently deepening around them, we would point out to our farmers, that although they have expended \$10,000,000 upon the implied continuance of a

policy which was intended to draw Western American exports through the St. Lawrence, and although they have seen these prospects swept from their sight ere any results could have been obtained from such sacrifices—yet, resources there are—open to their own exertions and their own legislation—far more valuable, permanent, and comprehensive, than any which could have been obtained under the dependent conditions of the “nursery” system. We know that,—however it may be magnified or underrated for “political considerations,”—there is a feeling of despondency in the mind of the Canadian farmer, which has not wholly arisen from the withdrawal of protection—for he does not desire to be enriched at the expense of a less fortunate and more heavily burthened people. If he has complained, that while that market—for the supply of which he has been induced to neglect the formation of a nearer and more certain one, and to engage in enterprises suited rather to the treasury of an Empire, than of a Colony,—has been thrown open to his rival,—it has been because this was done without any stipulation in behalf of the Canadian for similar consideration at the hands of that rival, in return for the favors so freely granted to the American. Under this sweeping revolution in our commercial position, we have felt it necessary to lay before our farmers,—as far as we are competent—the opening prospects of a new order of things, and to take that latitude of discussion which the title of this essay may not appear to warrant, but which our altered, and now *chrysalis* position, may, we hope, excuse. We have, as far as possible, avoided controverted questions and endeavoured to present with fairness the relative merits of rival communications, and rival political *nostrums* ; and so far as we have referred to the latter, we

have endeavoured to view them in a purely Canadian light—appropriating that which appears to be for our interests, and rejecting what does not, whether it forms part of a “harmonious whole” or otherwise: and we have done so without fear of being charged with an apparent inconsistency—without favor to the political parties who ride into power and place upon the passions, the prejudices, and the ignorance of an unsuspicious and careless people—and without an unweaned affection for things unseen, or a vain attempt to evade or reconcile the altered conditions of our commercial position. If we have not evinced a sufficient respect for the great theories of the day—it is because we believe that systems, and theories, and laws, can do little more for an over-legislated people—that it is not the institutions of a country which make the people—but that those institutions spring from the people—that all monarchies are not like England—nor all Republics like that of North America—and that there is nothing in the soil, the climate, the commercial and geographical position of Canada, which,—if the people are but true to themselves—should render her inferior to, or as a home less desirable than,—any other portion of the earth.

Lastly—if our farmers but shake off that apathy and indifference to the control of their own and their children’s destinies which has been produced by bad Colonial training—by absence of adversity—and by a distaste for strife, which may become political cowardice,—if they escape from the generous exertions of demagogues and “friends of the people,” and bear aloft above all political differences and all religious dissensions, the neutral and pre-eminent question of their common prosperity—do as a people, what they would have each other do—give their own attention to

their own affairs—"be sober, be vigilant," an honest, non-repudiating, God-fearing people—they cannot fail to secure those blessings which have been transferred from the disobedient Jew to the believing Gentile; "their sons growing up as the young plants—their daughters as the polished corners of the temple—their garners full and plenteous with all manner of store,—their flocks and herds multiplying—their oxen strong to labor—no decay, no leading into captivity, and no complaining in the streets."

